

# The Musical World

## AND Dramatic Observer.

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next, Dec. 12, at 8.  
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JAMES G. SYME, Secretary.

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**SCHOLARSHIP.**—The NEXT COMPETITION, which is open to soprano vocalists between the ages of 17 and 20 years, who must be British-born subjects, will take place in the Academy on WEDNESDAY, Jan. 7, 1891, at 10.30 a.m. Candidates must not be, nor ever have been, students in the institution, and must send in their names, along with certificates of birth, to the undersigned, on or before Dec. 17, 1890.  
The scholarship amounts to 15 guineas a year, which is appropriated towards the cost of three years' instruction in the Academy, and it is awarded to the candidate who may be judged to display the best voice, in conjunction with musical aptitude.  
JAMES G. SYME, Secretary.

**ROYAL COLLEGE of MUSIC. — An ORCHESTRAL**  
CONCERT will be given at St. JAMES'S HALL, PICCADILLY, by the Pupils of the Royal College of Music on WEDNESDAY, December 10, 1890, at 8 o'clock, under the special patronage of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, K.G., President of the College, and H.R.H. the Princess of Wales. Conductor, Professor C. V. Stanford, Mus. Doc. Stalls, 5s.; balcony, 2s. 6d.; area and gallery, 1s. Tickets to be obtained of the Registrar at the College, Kensington Gore; Chappell and Co., 50, New Bond-street, and 15, Foultry; of the usual agents; and at St. James's Hall.

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The next STUDENTS' ORCHESTRAL Concert will take place at Princes' Hall on Dec. 9, at 8 o'clock. Conductor, Mr. F. CORDER. The programme will include:—Concerto in C (Beethoven), Rondo in E flat (Mendelssohn), Concerto in D minor (Mendelssohn), Concerto in G minor (Mendelssohn), for pianoforte and orchestra; Symphony in D (Beethoven), Overture, "Mirella" (Gounod); Vocal Selection, "Linda di Chamounix" (Donizetti); Variations for Violin and Orchestra, "La Folie" (Corelli); Air, "The Morning Prayer" "Eli" (Costa), etc., etc. Tickets, price 5s. and 2s. 6d., may be obtained at the Hall; from Messrs. A. Hammond and Co., 5, Vigo-street; or from the Secretary, at the College.

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Admission, 2s. 6d. before 5.0; 1s. after.  
3.0.—SATURDAY CONCERTS.—Vocalists: Madame Amy Sherwin, Mr. Georg Henschel. The Crystal Palace Choir, The Grand Orchestra; conductor, Mr. August Manns. Mr. Hanish MacCunn's Choral Ballad, "The Cameronian's Dream," and Dr. Hubert Parry's new Cantata, "L'Allegro ed il Penseroso," will be performed. Seats, 1s. and 2s. 6d.  
5.15.—PRESENTATION OF PRIZES to the LONDON RIFLE BRIGADE by the LADY MAYORESS, in the presence of the LORD MAYOR and Sheriff, who will attend in State. Band of London Rifle Brigade, under direction of Mr. Hiram Henton.  
8.—GRAND PROMENADE CONCERT. Vocalists: Miss ROBERTSON and Mr. MUSGROVE TUFNAIL. The Crystal Palace Military Band; bandmaster, Mr. Charles Godfrey, jun.; accompanist, Mr. A. J. Eyre, F.C.O. No extra charge.

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The Programme will include Songs and Duets by Handel, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Loewe, McCunn, Bizet, Mozart, Donizetti, and Henschel.—Tickets: Stalls, 7s. 6d.; Balcony, 3s.; Admission, 1s.; of the usual Agents; at Princes' Hall; at Tree's Office, St. James's Hall.—N. VERT, 6, Cork-street, W.

**MEISTERSINGERS' CLUB.**

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Artist—Madame SCHLUTER, Mr. B. NEWMAN, Mr. FRANK BARAT.  
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JOSEPH O'SHAUGHNESSY'S GRAND EVENING CONCERT on TUESDAY, December 9, 1890, commencing at 8 o'clock. Vocalists: Miss José Sherrington, Miss Anna Roekner, and Mlme. Helen D'Alton; Mr. Mervyn Humphreys, B.A.M.; Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Avon Saxon (by kind permission of R. D'Oyly Carte, Esq.), Mr. Richard Green (by kind permission of D'Oyly Carte, Esq.), and Mr. David Hughes, R.A.M. Piano: Miss Kathleen Currie. Conductors: Signor Romili and Mr. Haydn Parry. Numbered stalls, 5s.; unreserved seats, 2s. 6d. and 1s. Tickets to be obtained of Mr. O'Shaughnessy, 25a, Goldhurst-terrace, South Hampstead, and at the Hall.

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FIRST RECITAL, STEINWAY HALL, WEDNESDAY, December 10th, at 3 p.m.  
Violinist, Mr. Alfred Gibson. Accompanist, Miss Mary Carmichael. Conductor, Mr. John Farmer.  
Tickets 5s., 2s. 6d., and 1s., of Chappell's, Stanley Lucas, and at the Hall.

**MR. RICHARD GOMPERTZ begs to announce TWO**  
EVENING CONCERTS of CHAMBER MUSIC at PRINCES' HALL on THURSDAY, Dec. 11, and THURSDAY, Dec. 18, to commence at 8 o'clock. Executants: Messrs. R. Gompertz, Haydn, Inwards, Emil Kreis, Charles Ould (the Cambridge University Musical Society's String Quartet). Vocalists: Miss Lena Little and Mr. William Shakespeare. Pianists: Mr. Leonard Borwick and Professor C. Villiers Stanford, Mus. Doc.

The programme of the First Concert will include: (Beethoven), String Quartette in E flat, Op. 127; (Schubert), C Minor Allegro (fragment), for strings; (Stanford), Piano Quintet in D Minor; Aria (Mozart); and Gipsy Songs (Dvorak).

The Second Concert: (Brahms) String Quartet in B flat, Op. 67; (Schumann), String Quartet in A Major, Op. 41. No. 3; (Beethoven), Sonata for Piano and Violin, in G Major, Op. 30; (Brahms), two Songs for contralto; and Violin Obligato, Op. 91.

Prices: Single tickets, 10s. 6d., 5s., 2s., subscription, 15s., 7s. 6d., 3s. Tickets at Basil Tree's St. James's Hall Ticket Office; Princes' Hall; usual Agents; and Daniel Mayer, 180, New Bond-street, W.

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# The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1890.

## FACTS AND COMMENTS.

At the request of Dr. Mackenzie, Mr. T. L. Southgate read a paper on the subject of the recently discovered Egyptian Flutes to the pupils of the Royal Academy of Music on Wednesday last, when, in addition to the explanations furnished by him at the last meeting of the Musical Association, a short *resumé* was given of the habits and customs of the ancient Egyptians. Mr. Southgate, to whom the study of these antiquities is evidently a labour of love, also showed a numerous collection of drawings he had himself copied from the Egyptian frescoes in the British Museum and from rare books representing the many different species of instruments being played. From some of these drawings Mr. Southgate assumes that the flutes of the description recently found—in addition to being played together, of which there can be no doubt—were manipulated by the hands being crossed, *i.e.*, that the right flute was played by the left hand, and the left flute by the right hand; but independently of such a position greatly adding to the difficulty of performance it is observable that the hands only appeared crossed in full-face representations of players—when a side view is given such is not the case, and the inference would seem to be that the apparent crossing of the hands results from the inability of the artist to represent one of the pipes being held slightly in advance of the other. Fac-similes of other flutes found at different periods were also exhibited and played upon by Mr. Finn, amongst them a copy of a specimen having eleven holes,

now in the possession of M. Maspero, the celebrated Egyptologist. This flute, which was played *à bec* with a reed, gave a complete chromatic scale of half-tones. The date of this instrument is supposed to be 1575 B.C.

From the Lady Maket's three-hole flute it is evident that the ancient Egyptians possessed our tetrachord (*i.e.*, tone, tone, semitone), and since by a little extra pressure the fifths of these notes are produced we may conclude that they were not unfamiliar with our diatonic scale, at any rate as far as the intervals are concerned. If to this be added a pipe which produces chromatic intervals it will be seen that as regards scale construction we cannot boast of much progress! Whether the old Egyptians used this scale as we do is quite another matter—one indeed which promises to satisfy at once the antiquarian and the combative instincts of the musical fraternity. Whether, like the Greeks, they had various “modes” in which the distance of the tones and semitones from a key-note varied, and, if so, how many, are the first questions which must be asked and answered before we congratulate ourselves on knowing more about the music of the old Egyptians than the range of their tonal system and the nature of the degrees into which it is divided. It is, of course, highly improbable that a people so intelligent would possess a scale of sounds such as these pipes reveal without perceiving and availing themselves of some, at least of its possibilities; but, remembering that all art implies *selection*, we should be rash to conclude that the Egyptians chose the same arrangements as the Greeks. Rather is it likely that the transitions from Assyrian and Egyptian to Grecian styles seen in architecture and sculpture took place also in music under the chastening and beautifying influence of that exquisite sense of proportion and fitness which marked the Grecian intellect, and enabled it to establish canons of beauty which even Time has been powerless to affect.

In some long-forgotten chapter of literary reminiscences, a story is told of a conversation between Tennyson and Browning. The two great writers had been discussing their aims and methods, and at last Browning said: “Well, your poetry is the burgundy, mine the port; let us hope there is good drinking in each.” We may be pardoned for withholding the name of the narrator of this anecdote, for we have forgotten it; and certainly we can offer no opinion as to its authenticity. But it might serve very well as a text for the writer who wished to do that which has been done, and well done, in a recent number of the “Edinburgh Review,” wherein may be found a thoughtful article on the comparative merits of Tennyson and Browning. The writer of this, after carefully weighing their qualities, sums up rather in favour of Tennyson. “We are led to the conclusion,” he says, “that Lord Tennyson, from the more exquisite finish and melody of his style, and from the breadth and elevation of his thoughts, not only stands upon a far higher pinnacle than Mr. Browning ever reached, but also will take a more permanent place hereafter amongst the greatest of English poets.” We have little intention of asking for a confirmation or a reversal of this judgment; at any rate, upon the evidence adduced by the “Edinburgh” reviewer. It appears, however, that there are one or two issues involved in the discussion which have not as yet received proper attention.

For example: it cannot be said that there exists any really final definition of poetry. Plenty have been offered, but there is none which will enable the student to say certainly of each work pre-

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sented to him, This is, or this is not, poetry. Matthew Arnold's definition of poetry as a criticism of life is subtler than many suspect; but it is not exclusive enough, for it leaves untouched the great question of form, and indicates no method by which the relative merits of two poets can be judged. We are provided with no better epigram, however. Reason appears to side with those who maintain that beauty of form is the ultimate test by which high poetry may be distinguished from high imaginative prose—it being understood that beauty of form comprises both rhythmic and verbal beauty. If beauty of expression be lacking, a work may contain all the other qualities; it may have imagination, subtlety of analysis, strength, humour, pathos—anything you will; but it will hardly be poetry in the modern sense of the word. Mere realistic propriety of expression will not do. It is absurd to say that if you set out to conduct the analysis of a morbid spiritual state, and to relate the results in verse, that verse must of necessity partake of the ugliness and disorder of the subject. Its expression may—must—be complex, and its thoughts can hardly lie on the surface; but if you find it impossible—having accepted the conventionalities of verse—to get beauty of expression, the alternative conclusions are that either you are not a great artist, or that you have chosen a subject unfitted to the medium in which you work—which is much the same thing. This, again, leaves untouched such work as much of Walt Whitman's, which possesses a full measure of merely expressive beauty; but how are we to decide whether the noble piece—that is a sufficiently neutral word—beginning "When lilacs last in the door-yard bloomed" is poetry or not. But the test must, if accepted, shut the door upon much of Browning's work which, however marvellous in its subtlety or strength, is quite deficient in beauty of expression.

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The question remains for consideration whether, having regard to the peculiar conditions of intellectual life to-day, it is really poetry that we want. Poetry, that is, as it is exemplified in the Laureate's work. For ourselves, we confess that there seem to be qualities in Browning's work—even in his most unmanageable work—which are far more precious than mere beauty of workmanship. Because this is sometimes lacking, shall we voluntarily forego the help of his splendid faith in the ultimately lofty destiny of man? Shall we refuse the purification of spirit which comes of his noble tragedy? or refuse to bear the burden of his almost intolerable pathos? Are we to forbid ourselves to enjoy his many-sided humour, or to study with him the secrets of all art? To do this simply because his utterance is sometimes inadequate were the most childish folly, unworthy at least of those for whom art is but a manifestation of the central life. At no time in the world's history has there been a greater need of such things as may be found in Browning's writings; and even if it be proved that they are not art, then it is something else than art that we want. Finally, if we are driven from this last position there is but this to say: that Browning has written so many poems of the most convincing beauty that we may surrender the rest to the tormentors; there is still enough left of consummate art to entitle him to immortality.

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At last, after countless reports have been circulated and contradicted with respect to Sig. Verdi,—whether he was or was not writing a new opera, and whether it was founded on "Romeo and Juliet," or on "King Lear," or some other subject—a definite statement has been made in the "Gazzetta Musicale di Milano," which being the organ of Messrs. Ricordi, Verdi's publishers, may be accepted as stating the whole truth. Verdi has written, or

rather has partly written, and is busy finishing a new opera, and it is not a tragedy at all, but a comic opera entitled "Falstaff," the libretto being the work of Sig. Boito. It will be interesting to read some passages from the statement now put forth. "The *maestro* has on many occasions of late years expressed to intimate friends his desire to write a comic opera, but he was restrained by the almost insurmountable difficulty of finding a subject of brilliant comicality. We know for a fact that Verdi had read all the Italian and French comic writers without finding a subject that fully satisfied him. Whilst Verdi was at Milan in the summer of 1889, and speaking with Arrigo Boito on the subject of comic opera, Boito seized the opportunity, and not only proposed to Verdi a subject, but with marvellous rapidity he, in a few hours almost, sketched out and presented to the *maestro* an outline, 'Falstaff,' drawing this typical character from the various comedies and dramas in which Shakspeare has introduced him. The proposal pleased Verdi; but he plainly told Boito that he would accept the new libretto only on condition that it should not hinder him from any other work, for (said he) I do not wish to have the remorseful consciousness of having retarded by an hour the completion of your 'Nerone.' Satisfied by Boito's assurances, Verdi accepted the libretto, and in the course of last spring, during a stay at Nervi, Boito wrote a great part of the libretto. This has since been entirely completed, and Verdi has up to the present time completed about one-half of the opera. 'Falstaff' is a lyric comedy in three acts and five scenes; the characters are numerous and important. We do not know where Verdi will decide to have his new opera performed, as he has repeatedly declared that he began the work simply for his own amusement, not knowing when or whether he should ever finish it. Any particulars about the date or place of performance are therefore incorrect."

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From a private source we have the following description of the circumstances under which the news was made public:—

On Wednesday last Verdi had invited to dinner the musical editor, Giulio Ricordi, and his family, at the Hotel Milan where generally the *maestro* puts up when he goes to Milan. Arrigo Boito was also one of the guests. The great old *maestro* was in excellent humour, and the dinner was as cordial and pleasant as possible. It must be noted that Ricordi ignored completely that Verdi was writing a new opera, as the secret of the whole affair had been most scrupulously kept even from Verdi's old friend and editor; and for that purpose the *maestro*, who usually got Ricordi to furnish him with paper of a special quality for his musical work, this time had it sent from another source. When the dinner was nearly over Boito got up and proposed the following toast: "Let us drink to the health and success of big belly!" (*pancione*). At this strange and sibilline toast the guests were not a little astonished and surprised, for none of them knew the *burly party* to whose health they were invited to drink. To clear up matters then Boito renewed the toast, inviting the guests to drink to the health of *Falstaff*! The editor Ricordi was still in a fog, and seemed more surprised than ever at Boito's strange toasts; but Mrs. Giuditta Ricordi, who was sitting next to Madame Verdi, had the sudden idea that perhaps they might allude to some new work by Verdi, so she turned round and whispered to Mrs. Verdi: "Is it a new opera?" To which the latter replied in the affirmative. At this sudden and unexpected revelation the joy of Ricordi and the other guests knew no bounds.

The same correspondent adds further interesting details of the opera.

The new opera has for principal character a baritone; there are beside many other personages of secondary importance. The chorus has a very prominent part in the whole opera, and will be composed of 15 male voices and 13 female voices, all of them to be good singers and practised musicians. Verdi said that he has already written half the opera, which he expects to finish in two or three months' time, so as to have it performed at the Scala for the first time during the Carneval of 1891-92; the opera



will be in three acts and five tableaux. Ricordi improved the occasion by asking Boito when he will produce his long-promised and much-expected "Nerone," to which the gifted poet and musician replied that being now busy in touching up the libretto of "Falstaff" he could not work at his opera, but that he would finish it during next year and present it to the public in 1892. He has already finished the first, third, fourth, and fifth acts of it. It is known that the opera has no overture, and that it opens with a chorus-march of great beauty for altos and children's voices (*voci bianche*) which accompanies the Emperor on his way to the temple.

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The question of voice-production is notoriously set about with the sharpest of thorns. When the millennium comes rival teachers of singing may perhaps find themselves in agreement as to the best method; but it is quite certain that their agreement would cause them immense surprise and not a little vexation of spirit. There is nothing more astonishing to the observer of the musical world and its ways than this, for at first sight nothing would seem easier to find than the right way of using the instrument which is practically possessed by all. And yet the science of voice-production seems to have scarcely emerged from the condition of crude empirics, for every singing-master is ready to point out defects in the methods used by even the greatest singers which he could easily have remedied. A very curious instance is afforded by the statement made by the ablest of our Transatlantic contemporaries—that Campanini has reappeared at various concerts with great success after an interval of two years, during which it had been thought that his voice had quite gone. Unless our memory is at fault it was stated some months ago that the famous tenor had undergone an operation which had resulted in the complete restoration of his voice. This, we believe, was proved to be inaccurate; and the later information indicates that the recovery is due to Mr. F. de Rialp, of New York. This gentleman discovered that the method of production hitherto employed by Campanini was altogether wrong, and by the substitution of his own method has enabled the singer to regain his powers. If the statement be well founded Mr. de Rialp has proved his case by the best possible evidence; and we are face to face with the astounding fact that a singer who has enjoyed a high reputation for many years has been using a wrong method all the time.

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The announcement that Franchetti's opera, "Asrael," has been selected for the opening night of the German opera season in New York is one which may well set the English amateur thinking. "Asrael" may or may not be a great work, but it is obviously worthy of a hearing; but can the most optimistic among us entertain the least hope of seeing the opera presented on the English stage during the present generation? It is impossible to believe that Mr. Harris would not give us this as well as other novelties if he could see any promise of support—for we have no right to ask any manager, even if he be a Sheriff of London, to produce works which are not likely to pay. And taking into account such circumstances as the miserably poor attendance at even a Richter concert whenever a novelty is produced, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the fault rests ultimately with the amateurs. We have tried to draw some comfort from the unaccustomed enthusiasm with which the London public has received so great a work as "Orfeo" and so great an artist as Giulia Ravogli; but even this, however favourably one may be inclined to interpret it, cannot atone for the general apathy of years. When we compare the operatic and orchestral performances given in New York with those given in London it is impossible not to feel a sense of humiliation. In the face of such facts silence is perhaps best.

The new number of "The Meister," to which we referred last week, contains, amongst much equally interesting matter, a poem on "Tristan et Isolde," by M. Gabriel Mourey, a talented young French writer, who has just completed a translation of Mr. Swinburne's magnificently panegyric "Tristan of Lyonesse." There has been, we imagine, but one poet whose genius was absolutely equal to the task which M. Mourey has set himself—the author of "Les Fleurs du Mal;" but it will be seen that the following poem has no small share of the gloomy ecstasy of the theme:—

## TRISTAN ET ISOLDE.

Viens Nuit d'amour, o Nuit, Nuit rédemptrice, o Mort,  
Viens nous emporter loin des humaines tempêtes!  
Oh! mourir ainsi, mourir! Devançons le sort,  
En sentant l'infini bourdonner dans nos têtes!  
Avoir le ciel entier pour soi, n'être plus qu'un  
Et deux pourtant, fondre mon être dans ton être!  
Devenir azur, nuage, étoile, parfum,  
Loin des hommes, loin du Demain, loin du Peut-être!"  
Et la Nuit les serrait dans ses flots harmoniques;  
Les sources chantaient sous les dômes d'arbres verts  
Mystérieusement; d'idéales musiques  
Leur inondaient le cœur, tombant des cieux ouverts.  
Et les amants disaient: "Que résonnent tes glas,  
Nuit Rédemptrice, o Mort." Mais la Mort ne vint pas.

Paris, September, 1890.

GABRIEL MOUREY.

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We reprint elsewhere certain admirable remarks made by Mr. Bernard Shaw in the current number of the "World." They stand in need of no editorial comment, and we leave them to do their own work. We may here note, however, that Mr. Shaw has joined the ranks of those who desire the establishment of a State Opera. Under certain conditions such an institution would deserve the support of all. We are fully conscious of the dangers attending it in practice; for, after all, the State is in such a connection only the amateur writ large—or small. But if it be granted, as it is, that it is the State's duty to aid painting and literature, surely it is obvious that music is deserving of a little help. There ought to be one opera-house conducted upon artistic, rather than commercial principles; whose management would not be compelled to pander to the lowest taste, and to mount only such operas as were worn so threadbare by constant use that the clattering of their bones is an offence; where, in short, it was always possible to hear the best and the freshest. We have our National Gallery of Pictures—why not our National Gallery of Music?

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Every opera-goer will exult in his heart on hearing that Giulia Ravogli and her sister will return next year to Covent Garden for Mr. Harris's season. Miss Ravogli was naturally willing to remain with Mr. Lago, under whose auspices she won her first success with the London public; but "*les affaires sont les affaires*." Everybody is to be congratulated—including the lady herself, who will now be seen in surroundings worthy of her genius. We believe that Miss Ravogli, whose first impressions of a London winter have not been altogether happy, is already "flying south" to her beloved Italian sun. She has at present no intention of returning to Italy before her return next season. The Italian impressions are, as Miss Ravogli said in one of her charming confidences, "*lous décaés*;" and she has certainly gained enough laurels here to last her well through the winter.

Our readers should not forget the forthcoming performances of the "Tempest" to be given by the Irving Amateur Dramatic Club at St. George's Hall on December 9 and 11, at which Sir Arthur Sullivan's music will be performed, it is believed, for the first time in London in connection with the play. Dr. Mackenzie is interesting himself in the musical portions of the programme, and the Royal Academy of Music will contribute valuable aid to the performance, as the band (under the direction of Mr. Battison Haynes) and the chorus will be formed chiefly by pupils from that institution. The part of "Ariel" will be acted by Miss Kate Johnstone, a student of the Academy, and the stage management will be undertaken by Mr. Charles Fry. It will be remembered that the Irving Club gave a remarkably successful performance of the first part of "King Henry IV." at the Lyceum Theatre last season.

"The English Light Opera Company, Limited," has issued a provisional prospectus from its temporary offices in Manchester. The capital is £2,000 in £1 shares, and a sentence from the prospectus sufficiently indicates the company's objects.

This company is about to be formed for the production in the British Isles of standard works of light opera, and for the acquisition of the necessary acting and other rights, costumes, properties, and other incidents. There is a constant and ever-increasing demand by the public for works of a light character, but a surfeit of burlesque has been experienced, and it is confidently believed that high-class comic opera will be heartily welcomed and receive a large measure of support.

The first work to be given is Messrs. Gunton and Stanislaus' "Lancashire Witches," a comic opera which was produced at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, in October, 1879, with success. Preference is to be given to the works of British composers. We shall be glad to hear of the company's success.

We understand that the defendants in the action for libel brought by the Chevalier Scovel against the "St. Stephen's Review" have been already served with the writs. The Chevalier's friends are wondering if his usual good luck will come to his aid in this instance. If tales be true he must certainly have been born under a lucky star. The lady whom he married—Miss Marcia Roosevelt—is popularly supposed to have a private income of £16,000 a year; he is said to have won the largest amount ever known at Monte Carlo in 1880; and it is a fact that he draws from the treasury of the Lyric Theatre a salary nearly equal to that of a Cabinet Minister.

Miss Amy Sherwin and Mr. Henschel will be the vocalists at to-day's Crystal Palace Concert. Dr. Parry's new cantata, "L'Allegro ed il Penseroso," and Mr. MacCunn's choral ballad, "The Cameronian's Dream," will be given. London amateurs should avail themselves of this, their first opportunity of hearing Dr. Parry's beautiful work.

Herr Waldemar Meyer played at the Concordia Club, Vienna, on Nov. 23, and gained enormous applause. The Viennese press pronounces him to be the finest violin player who has been heard in Vienna for many years, both as regards beauty and fulness of tone and characteristic interpretation.

We shall deal next week with the wonderful gifts of Master Jean Gerardy, the twelve-year-old violoncellist, who was heard at St. James's Hall on Thursday afternoon. It suffices now to say that the child plays not like a mere infant phenomenon but like a mature artist.

Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to accept two copies, large and small, of "Epigrammatica," by the Rev. Frederick K. Harford, of Westminster, published this week by Messrs. Sotheman, and to the merits of which we have already drawn attention.

The third and last concert of the present series of Messrs. Hann's Chamber Concerts will take place at the Brixton Hall on Tuesday evening. Mozart's Quartet in D, No. 7, Dvůřák's Quintet in A, and Greig's Sonata in F, for pianoforte and violin, are in the programme. Mr. Lloyd will be the vocalist.

Mr. Edward Holland will be the conductor of the concert to be given at the Meistersingers' Club on Tuesday evening, and Madame Schlüter, Mr. R. Newman, and Mr. Frank Barat will be the vocalists. The programme announced promises to be very interesting.

Mr. Joseph O'Shaughnessy will give an evening concert at Lad-broke Hall on Tuesday next, at 8. Miss José Sherrington, Mme. Helen D'Alton, Mr. Maldwyn Humphreys, and Mr. Avon Saxon are amongst those announced to take part.

Mr. and Mrs. Henschel's second vocal recital will take place on Monday afternoon at Princes' Hall. The programme will include songs and duets by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Loewe, Bizet, and the concert-giver.

Attention should again be called to the first recital to be given by Miss Emily Finney and Miss Marian Bateman at the Steinway Hall on Wednesday at 3 p.m.

The next competition at the R.A.M. for the Sainton-Dolby Scholarship will take place on Jan. 7, 1891. Candidates must send in their names before Dec. 17.

### A "DISGRUNTLED CRITIC."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: As I find by the last Crystal Palace programme-book that the genial and generally well informed "G" can tell nothing more with respect to the production of Brahms' Piano Concerto in D minor than "that its opus number (15) would indicate an early work," you will perhaps allow me to inform all who may take an interest in the matter that the first performance appears to have been at the fourteenth Gewandhaus Concert at Leipzig on the 27th January, 1859, when the solo part was played by the composer himself. I believe the work was actually five days performed earlier at Hanover, but this is probably to be regarded only as a sort of rehearsal for the Leipzig performance. It will, I think, be interesting in some respects to read the criticism of the work which appeared in the next number of the "Signale," a criticism which, though unsigned, we can hardly err in attributing to the pen of Herr Ed. Bernsdorf, then as now the chief critic of the "Signale." And this is what he says of it:—"The present (14th) Gewandhaus Concert was one of those in which another new composition was borne to the grave—the Concerto of Herr Johannes Brahms. In truth this piece is not constructed in such a way as to give satisfaction or enjoyment of any kind whatever; if we take away the earnest endeavour, and the sincerity of musical feeling—qualities which, strictly speaking, ought not to be put forward as positive merits in any one—there remains nothing but a dreary desert, truly without any comfort whatever. In no single place does the invention display anything which enchains or charms; the ideas either creep about, weary and sickly, or raise themselves to a certain



height in a feverish exaltation to fall back again in more utter exhaustion; in a word, the whole sentiment and invention of the piece are unhealthy. And if these pale and shadowy thoughts, now and then tinged by a hectic flush, have in themselves but a melancholy look, they are made still more saddening by the fashion in which they are elaborated and varied. Sometimes they are wrenched to such a degree that their poor limbs creak, and then again they are laced up so tight that they can scarcely breathe:—here they are made to perform the most marvellous capers and the most extravagant tricks; there, again, they are made to crouch down like miserable sinners and to put on their most piteous aspect. And all these things come to pass without any preparation, one after another or all in a lump. Of organic development or logical sequence there is hardly ever any thought: like infusoria in a drop of water seen through a microscope, the thoughts join on to one another as fast as they are generated and disappear again almost immediately. And this ranting and raving, this tugging and trailing, this squeezing together and tearing apart of phrases and flourishes has to be endured for over three-quarters of an hour. And besides digesting this unleavened mass, one has to gulp down a whole dessert of the ugliest sounds and the most ear-torturing dissonances. In addition, Herr Brahms has, with fullest consciousness, made the principal part in his Concerto as uninteresting as possible: there is absolutely nothing of any effective treatment of the piano or of novelty or refinement in the passage-writing: if anything ever crops up which would lend itself to brilliancy and fluency it is at once held down and covered up by a thick layer of orchestral accompaniment."

There, Sir, I think that is a "slating" which the most accomplished critics of our age and country would find it hard to beat: and I could hardly give a better specimen of what a man may do when he has a bad cause to back him.

I am, Sir,  
Yours obediently,  
R. W.

#### NATIONAL MUSICAL ASSOCIATION OF WALES.

"We respectfully beg to call your attention to the rules, objects, &c., herein enclosed, of the above Association.

"It is generally acknowledged that Wales has now attained a very high position as regards its vocal, and especially its choral music. But Welsh musicians, and those interested in the further development and culture of the art in Wales, have for years felt the serious disadvantage under which we labour on account of the backward state of instrumental music in our midst; and there seems to be at present a general consensus of opinion that in order to remedy this condition of things an association such as the above is needed, devoting itself entirely to musical matters, and unfettered by any organisation that might hamper its operations, and that the country is ripe for it.

"After preliminary meetings in South Wales, a meeting was held at Wrexham in 1888 with the view of ventilating this question, at which a valuable paper by Mr. Joseph Bennett on "The Possibilities of Welsh Music" was read. The result of that meeting was the formation of this Association, and both at Brecon in the following year and at Bangor this year various meetings have been held by the society, the Executive Committee having also met at Shrewsbury on other occasions. Papers bearing upon the business of the Association were read by some of the members at each of the annual meetings; and at Bangor, besides an interesting address by Principal Reichel, Mr. John Thomas (Pencerdd Gwalia), Harpist to Her Majesty the Queen, gave, with Miss Meta Scott, Merthyr, performances of pieces for harp and violin which were much appreciated. It is proposed that this initiative shall be followed at future annual meetings.

"The Association also proposes offering prizes for instrumental competitions at the forthcoming Swansea National Eisteddfod, and it further hopes to be able to encourage in other ways the study of orchestral instruments and the composition of orchestral works.

"To enable it to carry out these projects fully and successfully we are constrained to make an *urgent appeal* to Welsh musical art lovers and to the country generally to assist us with subscriptions and donations, and we venture to hope that we may count upon your generous assistance and support in the matter.

"Already orchestral societies are multiplying in the Principality and increasing in excellence, due, in some instances at least, to the efforts already made by this Association, and we trust by making an energetic and

a united effort now, Wales will ere long show a still more distinct advance in the same direction.

We have the honour to be,  
Your obedient servants,

(Signed) John Thomas (Pencerdd Gwalia), Chairman.  
D. Emlyn Evans (Hereford), Vice-Chairman.  
I. T. D. Llewelyn (Penllergare, Swansea), Hon. Treasurer.  
C. H. Wynn (Rûg, Corwen).  
Joseph Parry, Mus.Doc., Cantab (University Coll., Cardiff).  
John Henry Roberts, Mus.Bac., Cantab (Carnarvon).  
W. T. Rees (Alaw Ddu) Llanelli).  
I. T. Rees, Mus., Bac. (T.C.T.), Bow-street.  
John Roberts (Portmadoc).  
John Williams (Organist) (Carnarvon).  
Rees Jones (Landore, Swansea), Finance Secretary.  
W. M. Roberts (Wrexham), Corresponding Secretary."

#### MR. ALFRED FORMAN'S "TRISTAN AND ISOLDE."

The translator's field of work is hedged around with many a bristling difficulty. Even in prose these obstacles are often of the most deterrent nature; a happy turn of phrase obstinately refuses to take the appropriate curve in the alien tongue; a subtle shade of meaning finds no equivalent hue on the interpreter's pallet. But when the object of translation is not only a poem, but a great drama written for musical presentation on the stage, none but those equipped with the fullest panoply of word and idea can hope to render justice to the task.

It is this barrier which has so long shut off from the English public the poetic aspect of Richard Wagner's creations. No greater proof of this assertion could be adduced than the manner in which a well-known musical authority not long since handled the text of the "Ring des Nibelungen." Wrenching from their context certain lines of a version intended solely to fit in with the music, he held up the whole original poem to unmerited obloquy. That matter, however, has already been dealt with in these columns, and we now proceed to a pleasanter task: a notice of Mr. Alfred Forman's translation of Wagner's magnificent poem, "Tristan und Isolde."

Setting out from the principle that the highest flights of poetic thought cannot be followed by a mere slavish adherence to the letter of expression, Mr. Forman has endowed our literature with a work that will stand alone in that department which bears the heading "Richard Wagner;" for we feel justified in ranking it even higher than this gentleman's own version of the "Ring." Mr. Forman has seen at once that to rightly convey the thought of the original, he must interpret it in words that differ in some instances from the exact counterpart of the German; that to transmit the beauty of his model, he must place it in that light in which our eyes can gather the fullest force of its reflected rays; in one word, that his translation must be a *poem*.

That this could not be done without in some few minor, unessential details departing from the photographic method of procedure, will be evident to all who have attempted dealing with a great work written in a foreign tongue. But these variations are so slight that the best acquainted with "Tristan und Isolde" will not detect the deviations until, in "Tristan and Isolde," they take the verses one by one and compare the parallel passages. As an example we would instance the line "Ewig! Ewig!" rendered by Mr. Forman as "Deathless! Deathless!" where the idea is far more correctly given than by the use of any literal "ever, ever!" "eternal," and so forth; and again, the immediately succeeding lines, "Ungeahnte, nie gekannte überschwänglich hoch erhabne!" which are translated, "With name to go by never gifted! Past the search of sense up-lifted!" than which, though the critical may detect a verbal departure, we contend that no happier transmutation could have been invented, nor any that would so completely convey the sense of the utterance.

On the other hand, there are lines translated with a fidelity, both of sound and sense, that might well have appeared impossible; thus we have "Death beighten head! Death beighten heart!" for "Tod geweihtes Haupt! Tod geweihtes Herz!" the "beighten" being a welcome addition to our store of recently reclaimed, once almost lost, expressions, and at the same time a musical avoidance of the more obvious "devoted." Again, what more felicitous rendering could we have of the "Liebestod" than "Death-by-love"? There are hundreds of such

instances in Mr. Forman's work; but we pass from them to a more important point, i.e., the method in which the deep philosophy of the original is treated.

It is well known that Wagner, when writing "*Tristan und Isolde*," was deeply imbued with the philosophy of Schopenhauer, with whose writings he had but lately made acquaintance, though their essence was entirely at one with his own already printed "*Ring des Nibelungen*." Distinct articles of the Schopenhauerian creed may be found embedded in this superb drama, and none but an accomplished student of that philosopher's works could have so conveyed their central thought as has Mr. Forman, to whom the "*Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*" is as a household word. Occasionally the primary idea of this system peeps out of the lines in a place where Wagner had not introduced it, as in the paraphrase of "*Immer ein! ewig, ewig ein*," by "For ever only one, till World and Will be done;" but we consider these rare intrusions completely justified by the exigencies of the metre, and the reverent care with which they preserve the spirit of the poem.

Our present purpose would not be fulfilled, did we not adduce one or two quotations from the work before us. We select them from the Second Act, as it is that which bears the richest bloom of the whole garland. We append the following:

ISOLDE—"Frau Minne knewest thou not?  
Of her magic saw'st not the sign?"

The queen with heart  
of matchless height,  
who brings by will  
the worlds to light;  
life and death  
are left in her sway  
to be woven of sweetness and woe;  
while to love she lets hatred grow.

From death in pledge  
she took me to stand,  
filled with the work  
her holy hand;  
where she will bend it,  
when she will end it,  
how she will speed me,  
whither will lead me,  
her lordship I learned to be needful;—  
now let her behold me heedful!"

The lilt of these lines reminds us of one of Swinburne's sonnets, and the manner in which the rhyme, the alliteration, and the rhythm of the original have been preserved, is beyond all praise. The music seems to have leapt from the score into the text. Again:—

TRISTAN—"Is there named a grief,  
is there known a pain,  
that Day wakes not  
with its dawn again?  
When even there waits  
the Night at her gates,  
Isolde clings to the Day,  
with sign of it keeps me away.

The Day! The Day,  
while it round her gleamed  
till like the sun  
to grow she seemed,  
in queenly glory's  
quenchless blaze  
had rapt her from my gaze!

At its seething show,  
at its loud unrest  
he laughs, whose look  
the Night has blest;  
its fitful light'ning's  
flickering blaze  
our eyes no more  
has might to daze."

Only one more passage can we cite, where the lovers, almost lost to the world in the whirlwind of their love, breathe out to one another:—

"Hopes that held us  
while we hearkened—  
speechless whispers—  
warnings spoken—  
at holy twilight's  
full foretoken—  
fade, till sense and thought  
and will and world are nought.

Soon as the sun  
in our bosom dwindled,  
laughing stars  
instead were kindled.—  
In sweetness of  
thy wonder sunken!  
With softness of  
thine eyelight drunken!—  
Mouth to mouth  
and heart to heart!—  
Breaths but one  
where each was part!—"

Such is the strain in which this dialogue is maintained, that we feel, as with the German words themselves, that we have here no rhapsodising of a love-sick pair of mortals, but the yearning of a universe for return into its primeval one-ness, the longing of all creation for its resolution into that which the Indian sages dimly foreshadow when they sing of the World's Nirvana.

In conclusion, we must add that Mr. Forman, in a brief introductory note, silences the objection that his version cannot be "taken in strict and continuous company with the music," by suggesting "the alternative readings," which he apparently has at hand in case it were ever attempted to produce this music-drama in the English. His work has been approached from the purely poetical side, and as such it may well take place among the finest of our island's poems. We may fairly say that, had Richard Wagner been an Englishman, these are the words that he would have chosen wherewith to clothe his thoughts.

Unfortunately for our readers this translation has been published in a scanty edition of but 150 privately-issued copies, of which but few remain for disposal. These few may be obtained from the author, at the address given in our last issue, *vide* page 945.

### AN EARNEST ARTIST.

*A propos* of M. Maurel's views on singing we reprint the following from this week's "World":—"Thursday, it will be remembered, was a dark day, cold as the seventh circle. I presently found myself prowling about a great pile of flats, looking for a certain number at which I had to make a call. Somebody else was prowling also; and I no sooner became convinced that he was looking for the same number as I, and was probably going to call on the same person, than I resolved not to look at him; because to look at a man under such circumstances is almost tantamount to asking him what the devil he is doing there. Consequently it was not until we got inside, and were introduced, that I recognized in the stranger no other than Maurel. Imagine my feelings when I found that the business upon which he was bent was the formulation in some fashion of his demand as an artist for a more earnest treatment of his work and mission. "Of what value is your admiration of my *Iago* or *Rigoletto*," he said, in effect, "if you do not regard the opera as a serious entertainment? Besides, one of the conditions of a really admirable performance is that it shall be an organic part of a whole in which all the other parts are equally excellent in their due degree; and how can such a whole be organized except in a place where opera is taken seriously, both before and behind the curtain?" Maurel, having gone up and down upon the earth in search of such places, has wisely come to the conclusion they do not exist ready-made, and that the artists must themselves set to work to create them everywhere, by rousing the critics and educating the public to appreciate theatrical art. As a beginning, he wishes to submit his theory of art to criticism; to give sceptical dramatic critics illustrations of the dramatic resources of stage-singing; and finally to assert the claims of operatic actors to weighty social consideration, founded on a sense of the importance and dignity of their function in society, instead of the capricious fashionable vogue which they now enjoy only when they happen to be phenomenal executants. This explains the speech he made at the *Hôtel Métropole* the other day. He is anxious to enlarge that after-dinner sketch into a carefully considered address, giving practical examples of what he meant by saying that one should not sing the part of *Rigoletto* with the voice of Don Juan, and to deliver it to a select body of the critics of London, who, as profound thinkers thoroughly conversant with their subject on its philosophic, technical, and social sides, and brimful of general culture to boot, would at once seize his meaning and help him to convey it to the public. Modesty, and loyalty to my colleagues, restrained me from warning him not to generalise too rashly from the single instance with



whom he was just then conversing: so I merely hinted that though the London critics are undeniably a fine body of men, yet their *élite* are hardly sufficiently numerous to make up a crowded and enthusiastic audience. To which he replied that an audience of two would satisfy him, provided the two had his subject at heart. This was magnificent, but not war: we at once agreed that we could do better for him than that. However, prompt measures were necessary, as he has to leave London next week. So we then and there constituted ourselves an executive sub-committee, fixed the date of the lecture for the afternoon of Monday next, and chose for our platform the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, on which, as Iago, he inaugurated a new era in operatic acting. It was a cool proposal, especially as Maurel altogether declined to proceed on a commercial basis, and would only hear of putting a price upon admission on condition that the proceeds should be given to some charity. But the upshot showed that we knew our Irving, who promptly not only placed the theatre at Maurel's disposal, but charged himself with the arrangements. To the Lyceum, therefore, I refer the critics, the students, the amateurs, the philosophers, and the experts, as well as those modest persons who only wish to hear Maurel sing again, and to be shown how he changes the voice of William Tell into the voice of Don Juan."

G. B. S.

### MUSIC IN BRISTOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

At the Saturday Popular Concert on the 1st inst. a miscellaneous programme was presented. Miss Alice Gomez, who sang songs chosen at a *plébiscite*, and Mr. Arthur Smith, who contributed cornet solos, were the chief attractions. The excellence of singing of the choir deserves recognition. At the Monday Popular Concert on the 3rd a new overture specially written for the occasion by Miss Oliveria Prescott was produced. The work is in design a return towards the two forms of old overtures which were the precursors of the modern symphony, namely, the Italian and the French. They consisted of three movements, the first and last being quick and the middle one slow. The overture under notice has three movements approaching in design the older forms mentioned. The poetic basis of this interesting work was thus given in the programme: "Mendelssohn writes in one of his letters that music speaks, far clearer than words, the emotions that are in a composer's heart. Let us not, therefore, try to explain by words the composer's emotions in this music. Yet there is another way. Mendelssohn, when he went among beautiful scenes, returns home and writes music to express the emotions which had been aroused by those beautiful scenes. If anyone would know the scenes which called up the music of this Overture they must wander among the beech woods in autumn; see the great trees with their strong round limbs; they look like giant athletes. Over them the leaves are touched by autumn's fiery finger: they are red, yellow, and some still green. Here and there about the wood is a flash of white from the chalky bank; and above all is the blue sky. Here is suggestion enough for the first movement. For the second:—Not far from the beech-wood there stands a yew tree; it is one of those that were planted to mark the Pilgrims' way to Canterbury—maybe a thousand years ago. You see a wide trunk, deeply ribbed; soft browns and reds are in the wood, and richest green in the leaves of the spreading branches. Think of the different folks that tree has witnessed in all those years. There has been the lovers' meeting, the funeral procession, the pilgrims' chant; perhaps a band of soldiers, and by and by a little company of wandering singers. They are all gone by, and yet the tree stands, quiet and great in its loneliness. For the last movement the composer writes:—"I went to the larch wood to look for inspiration, but was led astray into the tangled brake by sorry blackberries, caught by wicked trailers of brambles, pulled this way and that way, while tall grasses dangled in my face; around me the flaming yellow bracken, and sunlight glinting in and about the leaves; over all the slender larches swaying their whole length in the winds, and beside them the unmoved beech-trees. Hence, I suppose, the thoughts that came tumbling about my mind next morning when I awoke, and which grew by the end of the day into this finale." The overture is happily conceived, contains much clever workmanship, and the various subjects are bright and arresting. Its performance was excellent, and the hearty applause with which the overture was received testified to the highly favourable impression it made. Dr. C. H. H. Parry journeyed to Bristol to direct the first performance in this city of his "English" symphony, which has been several times heard since its production at a

Philharmonic concert a few years ago. The composer and his symphony met with an enthusiastic greeting, and Dr. Parry was recalled. "The Flying Dutchman" overture of Wagner was the only other orchestral piece worthy of notice. Miss Hilda Wilson sang, among other things, the beautiful air "The Lord is long suffering," from Dr. Parry's "Judith," and Mr. W. Thomas, a local artist, contributed an Anacreontic song, "Fill me boy," by the same composer. Owing to the inclemency of the weather there was only a moderate audience, albeit an appreciative and sympathetic one.

### CRITICS AND CRITICISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: Unless you can find me a stronger antagonist than the courteous but timid "One of the Anonymous" I think I may fairly claim the stakes. All he has to offer on behalf of the critics seems to be their giddy youthfulness, the transparency of their anonymous disguise, and the old plea that they are entitled to respect *because* they are critics. Have I not a right then to turn aside with a smile and call "Next, please?" I maintain that artists alone are qualified to act as art critics, and though it cannot be expected until the millennium that the adversely criticised shall kiss the hand that smites them, I venture to assert that an artist can in the nature of things only regard the opinion of his fellows as the one to be respected. Take a simple case. The first musical work I ever produced was very kindly—too kindly—noticed by the press. Their praises advanced my worldly interests, and I should be ungrateful indeed to repudiate them; I can only say that a single fault-finding sentence from the lips of Ferdinand Hiller, George Macfarren, and Arthur Sullivan weighed more with me than all the praise of men whose very words, when they strove to go into technical detail, showed that they hadn't grasped the work one bit. I maintain that a critic's reputation rests upon the circulation of the paper or papers for which he writes, and this, in the case of a large daily paper, gives his opinion a weight and influence out of all proportion to its actual art value. Further, I maintain that the present system of pluralist critics conveys quite a false idea to the outside world as to the consensus of opinions, a false idea easily removed by the adoption of a single *nom de plume* on the part of each critic. Your correspondent's special pleading on this point is a little too ingenious. I leave out of the question the rightness or wrongness of the critic because, to speak in mathematical language, once admit infallibility (= infinity) as a factor, and the whole matter can no longer be argued. You might as well question the scheme of the universe.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

F. CORDER.

### FOREIGN NOTES.

French operas seem to be more and more finding that welcome abroad which is too often denied to them at home. Besides the performance of Berlioz' "Troyens" at Carlsruhe, the production of which seems to have been postponed from Dec. 2 (the date first given) to the 6th, we have to record the production of Chabrier's "Gwendoline" at Munich (this having also been performed at Carlsruhe) and of Massenet's "Manon" at Vienna. Both these works appear to have been very favourably received.

Meanwhile at the Paris Grand Opera they are thinking of producing a German work—no less than "Fidelio," with recitatives for the dialogue parts written by M. Gevaert. The cast, as at present arranged, is to be Leonora, Mme. Rose Caron; Florestan, M. Duc; Pizarro, M. Bérardi; Rocco, M. Plançon. It is hoped that the production may take place next January.

M. Colonne, at his Châtelet-concert on Nov. 23, produced a suite for orchestra, arranged from the music of the ballet "Callirhoe," by Mlle. Chaminade, which appears to have been very successful both with the public and the critics. The orchestration in particular is spoken of as singularly delicate and charming. One movement was encored—a thing which M. Colonne seldom allows. A week later M. Colonne produced a new scherzo for orchestra by M. Saint-Saëns.

M. Charles Widor is to be the successor of the late César Franck as Professor of the Organ at the Conservatoire; and as organist of Ste. Clotilde he will be succeeded by M. Gabriel Pierné, an esteemed composer, and, we believe, a pupil of the deceased musician.

Rubinstein's Overture, "Antony and Cleopatra," was produced at the 4th Philharmonic Concert at Berlin on the 24th ult. under Dr. v. Bülow. Herr Lessmann describes it as a very surprising and agreeable contrast to most of Rubinstein's later works, and altogether as a very fine piece, dramatically well worthy of its subject.

At the Berlin Hofoper it is intended to produce an opera, "König Hiarne," by a lady, Ingeborg v. Bronsart, wife of the well-known pianist. This is not the lady's first operatic work, as a setting of Goethe's "Jery und Bätely," composed by her, was brought out at Weimar in 1873. The present work has also been in existence some years.

The opera "Der faule Hans," by Alex. Ritter, which was in rehearsal at Dresden, has been withdrawn by the composer—some authorities say because the intendant of the theatre refused the composer permission to be present at the rehearsals; but this seems hardly likely. There is probably some other reason.

Frau Marie Wilt, a famous Vienna singer, well known in London some years ago under her Italianised name of Mme. Vilda, has celebrated her retirement from public life by a munificent gift of 100,000 florins to the municipality of Graz (a town where she made her *début* as a lyric artist) to serve as a fund, the profits of which are to be devoted to helping ten poor worthy students each year to obtain the degree of Doctor at the Universities of Graz and Vienna, without regard to religious opinions or nationality.

Tschaikovsky has addressed a letter to some Russian journals declining the public honours which it was proposed to offer him on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his appearance as a public artist. Perhaps twenty-five years is too short a period to justify shows of this kind—but, nevertheless, Tschaikovsky is the greatest and by far the most popular of living national composers, and if not now, he will some day deserve recognition in that capacity. Plenty of men have had jubilee celebrations who have deserved them less.

Died at Paris, on Nov. 27, Emanuele Muzio, an Italian composer and conductor of much distinction in his day. Born in 1825, he was taught the piano by the first wife of Sig. Verdi, and soon became skilful enough to be chosen conductor at various theatres in Brussels, London, New York, Venice, Cairo, and Paris. He wrote four operas, produced in Italy, none of which seem to have had any permanent success. Eventually he abandoned composition and conducting for teaching, and it is claimed for him that he taught not only Miss Clara Kellogg, the popular American *prima donna*, but also the two sisters, Carlotta and Adelina Patti. Perhaps this remains to be substantiated. He was to have conducted the first performance of "Aida" at Cairo, and Verdi is said to have been much disappointed that he was prevented from discharging the task.

## THE NEW ORPHEUS.

TO MADEMOISELLE GIULIA RAVOGLI.

Well may he ask, who in these lines shall read  
Of the new Orpheus: "Who has lips so strong  
That he can re-create from myth or song  
The old sweet singer of the shadowy mead?"  
Nay, one still lives whose lips with Hell can plead,  
Though all the Furies round his firm steps throng.  
Past the fierce guards he harps his way along,  
And at his voice redemption is decreed.  
Nay, the high gods are still alive to-day,  
And still keep count of all your fortitude.  
Lo, yonder in the dim Elysian wood  
One waits for you, with tender eyes that say  
"Behold me—Euridice!" And the grey  
Death, and the golden love, are understood.

S. R. T.

## The Organ World.

### COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS.

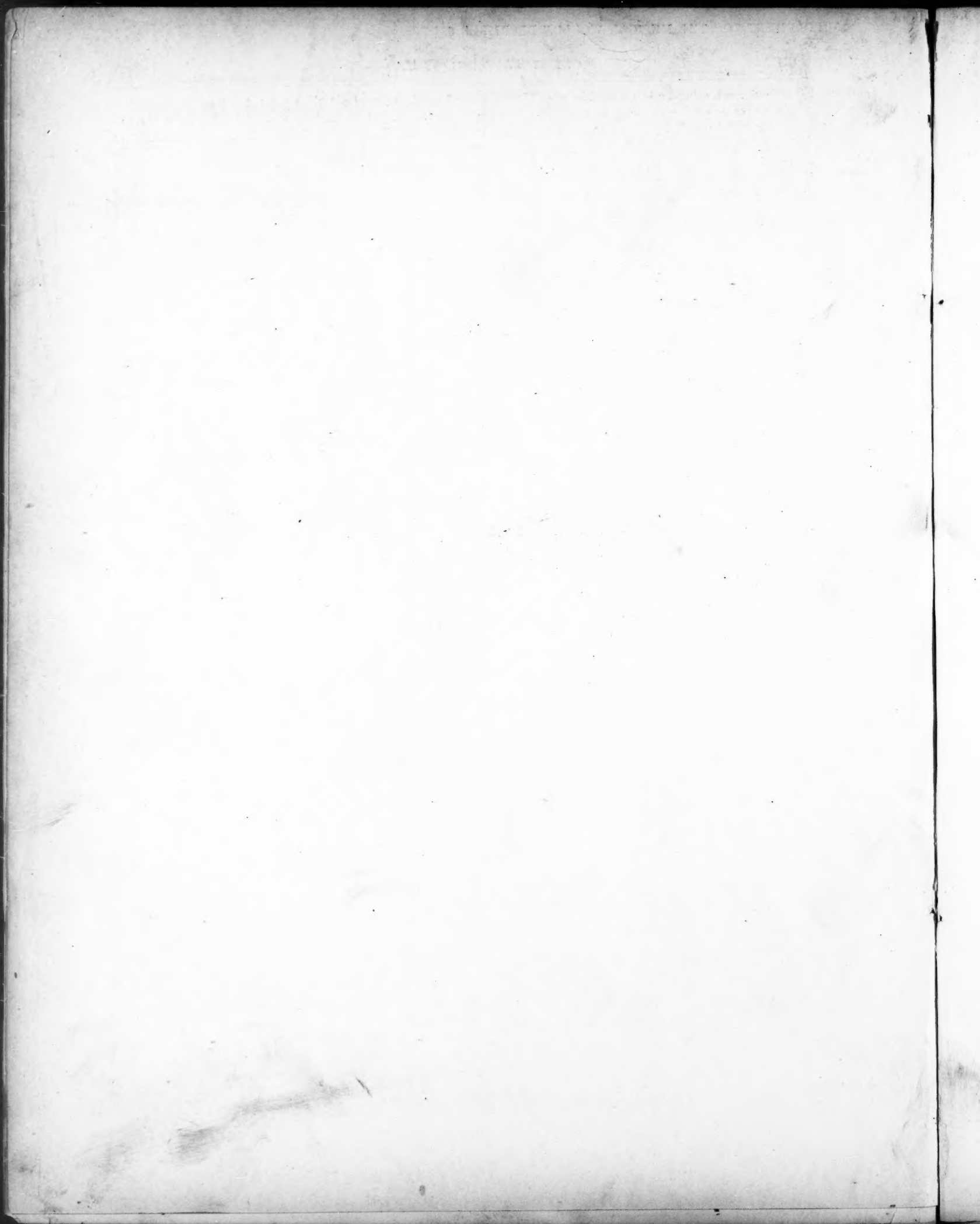
A paper of great practical importance on "The Swell in the Organ" was read on Tuesday evening last by Mr. G. A. Audsley, who commenced his lecture by remarking that as far as he knew the subject had not been treated of before, and certainly had not received the attention which its importance demanded. In tracing the history of the mechanical arrangement by which crescendo and diminuendo effects were produced on the organ Mr. Audsley said that its first inception would appear to be due to Mace, who, in his book published in 1676, entitled "Music's Monument," described the top of his "table organ" as consisting of eight leaves or "desks" working on a centre which could be successively opened by hand, the effect of which "was as the putting in of a new stop, so brisk and lively did the tone become." Although this was practically the "Venetian swell" it was nearly a century before organ builders connected this arrangement with the foot. In the "Spectator" for Feb. 8th, 1712, was an account of the invention of Mr. Jordon, who, in the organ built for St. Mary's, at the foot of London Bridge, had fixed to the front of the echo organ a shutter opened and closed by means of a swell pedal. This was called the "nag's head swell," and continued in general use for about fifty years, when it was succeeded by the so-called "Venetian swell," still in use. This was patented in 1789 by Samuel Green, who greatly increased the number of pipes placed in the swell box, going so far as to enclose those of the great organ in that built by him in St. George's, Windsor. Since Green's time practically no advance had been made by English organ builders in this important department of the organ, which, considering that it was the only means of obtaining expressive gradation of tone from a pipe, was a remarkable instance of the conservatism and slowness of perception not only of organ builders but of organists. The organ in St. George's Hall, Liverpool, built in 1855, had one hundred stops, twenty-five only of which were expressive. The Leeds Town Hall organ had but twenty-eight expressive out of ninety-four, while the monster organ which we had built in the Sidney Town Hall, and which contained 126 speaking stops, only had twenty-nine enclosed in swell boxes. On the other hand, the organ recently built by Roosevelt in the Auditorium at Chicago had 109 speaking stops, of which seventy-nine were enclosed in five separate swell boxes, which were controlled by four balance swell pedals. There was, doubtless, a prejudice amongst organists and organ builders against the multiplication of swell boxes and the enclosing of pipes in them, which arose from a belief that by such arrangement the tone of the pipes was materially altered by being enclosed, and this was undoubtedly the fact in most English organs; but this result accrued from the swell boxes being made too small, the sides too thick, and insufficiency of shutters. A swell box should be of such ample dimensions that the pipes could speak freely, the walls should not be more than an inch and a half thick, so that when closed the box might form a resonant chamber, and the shutters should be wide, and open on three sides, so that the back might form a reflector to the sound. With swell boxes so constructed the lecturer asserted the tone of the pipes would not be interfered with detrimentally. The ordinary swell box, made as small as possible, with a pitched roof, padded sides, and opening only on one side, was irrational as it was destructive to artistic effects. Pipes speaking in such boxes when closed had a bee-in-a-bottle sound and different character to when the shutters were opened, whereas in a crescendo or diminuendo it was obvious the quality of tone should be the same, and only vary in intensity. With regard to the great organ stops he would not enclose the foundation stops, but only the mutation ones and all mixtures. By this means the mixtures could be used with a single stop, whereas now they could only be used with the full organ. Moreover, a charming effect was produced by the addition of the mixtures softened by being enclosed. With regard to the choir organ, it was surely an anomaly that that part of the organ which was supposed to be specially designed to afford a sympathetic support to the voices should be left expressionless. How could a church choir be reasonably asked to sing with expression when accompanied by tones of a dead level intensity? Again, one of the finest imitations of orchestral instruments on the organ was the clarinet; but what would be said of a clarinet player who maintained an even *forte* tone throughout his performance? Yet it might be said its perfect counterpart in tone on the





CHEVALIER EMIL BACH.

From a photograph by the LONDON STEREOSCOPIC COMPANY.





organ was habitually placed in that department to which means of expression were never applied. Similar remarks applied to the solo organ, which was generally utterly unsupplied with expressive capacities, and it was on these stops that an organist was supposed to imitate the human voice! The tone of pedal stops should also be capable of being diminished in power, especially the heavy reeds. Indeed he would put all reeds in a swell box, which he ventured to assert would secure a far more artistic tone than that at present heard, and prevent that sudden "blare" which was now unavoidable at the entrance of the louder reeds. The multiplicity of swell pedals did not hinder the manipulation of the pedals, as some organists seemed to think, since only one balance pedal need be used at one time. He was much in favour of the balance pedal instead of the old swell pedal fixed down by a swing rod, because he believed the latter was conducive to the sensational and inartistic "swell-pumping" so frequently indulged in, especially by young organists. He did not want swell boxes to add to the crescendo and diminuendo powers of the organ, but to provide a means to temper its powerful tones. The balance pedals fixed themselves at any point, and when once so fixed there might possibly be no reason to alter their position during the entire performance of a piece. He had nothing to do with the question of the additional cost entailed by his suggestion. He was merely considering the organ *per se* as an expressive instrument, and in spite of the huge instruments, we built and our large number of fine performers he considered that the representative organ of this period had yet to be built in England. At the conclusion of the paper there was an animated discussion, in which Dr. Pearce, who occupied the chair, Dr. Mackenzie, Dr. Turpin, Mr. Ingram, and several other gentlemen took part. The proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Audsley.

#### NOTE.

The usual performance of Spohr's "Last Judgment" was given in St. Paul's Cathedral on the first Tuesday in Advent. There was a very large congregation, and the work was finely rendered, the dramatic passages being most impressively given. Dr. Martin conducted with his usual skill, and Mr. Hodge presided at the organ with great judgment and good effect.

#### THE SATURDAY "POPS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR: May I through your columns ask a question to which I am unable to find an answer? Why is it necessary at the Saturday Popular Concerts at St. James's Hall to open the doors for the 1s. seats one hour and a-half before the concert begins: for the 3s. balcony seats one hour before? Of course if there is a weighty reason for this arrangement one can but bow to the inevitable; but there would be more satisfaction in the hour and a half's penance if one knew it to be unavoidable.

Can any audience really require one hour and a-half to "settle down?" The St. James's Hall audiences certainly do not. If the manager of these concerts were next Saturday to take his stand for a shilling seat he would find more than half of them taken within fifteen minutes of the opening of the doors, and within half-an-hour every place gone. This would bring him to two o'clock. There would still ensue for him an hour's weary waiting, broken only by watching the balcony audience go through the same scramble for the best places as he had experienced half-an-hour earlier. Even had he been wise enough to bring lunch and a book with which to pass the time, I think that by 3 p.m. he would hardly be in the state of mind or body in which to appreciate the greatest musical treat of the concert season.

Will there not always be those who come half or even a whole hour before the doors open to get the front seats? Whether the doors open at 2:30 or 12:30 anyone living at half-an-hour's distance from the Hall must now leave home at the latest at 12 a.m. for a 3 p.m. concert. Should the manager make the experiment suggested I think he would either never repeat it or he would not rest until he had devised some better arrangement for the unnumbered seats. For those who, like myself, possess neither unlimited time, Herculean strength, nor a full purse, these concerts are now out of the question. This does not seem quite to carry out the idea of a Popular Concert.

A SUFFERER IN THE CAUSE OF MUSIC.

## The Dramatic World.

### "LONDON ASSURANCE."

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDHOUSE,—

We live fast nowadays, and the things and people of ten years ago are already mythical. This one admits readily enough in the abstract—as indeed there are not many things except a few elementary truths that one does not admit readily in the abstract. But when one barks one's shins against a hard fact, as one is sauntering pleasantly along a soft myth-road, the disillusion is sudden and astonishing.

There was the Criterion-myth: how universally it was accepted, and to what mistaken conclusions it led! Not ten years ago everyone assumed that the Criterion was a wicked theatre given up to "fast" plays, in which the lines—like those of Mr. Joseph Lebanon—had either no meaning at all, or *two*. This was a fact so well established that Mr. William Archer wrote a long book to prove it: being a clever man, he knew that an established fact needs a terrible amount of proof. (The book was called "Dramatists of to-day," and occasionally touched upon Lord Tennyson's plays and other cognate subjects; but its King Charles's head was the naughty Criterion, and the lines he quoted to prove its naughtiness would have made a less modest person blush.)

Most people believed in this mythic Criterion—which was invented, let me note, by the Lord Chamberlain, about the time of the production of the "Pink Dominos." There are still respectable middle-aged ladies who refuse to go to Mr. Wyndham's theatre, partly, no doubt, because "it is underground and they might be suffocated," but chiefly because they have been given to understand that they "ought not be seen there"—so that if they ever *do* go, it is to a private box, where they can be invisible. Whether suffocation is less likely in a private box I don't know; let us be charitable and assume that they think so.

But, alas, the Criterion myth has burst as a pricked balloon; it has been proved, like many another myth, the precise opposite of the truth. Go to see "London Assurance"—a play in which the most Pecksniffian nose has hitherto not scented impropriety. You will find that what was virtuous enough for the Haymarket, the Prince of Wales's, the Vaudeville, could not pass the eagle eye of Mr. Wyndham. Lines which have hitherto passed for sheer fun at the most respectable playhouses are not respectable enough for the Criterion.

There was a time when, on the threat that a creditor will put in a "man in possession," Dazzle jovially asked whether they "couldn't make it a woman?" Oh, tut! oh, sad! When you come to think of it, what depravity was here! And again, when Charles Courtly was said to have obtained money as a poor man with a wife and six children, on his protest that he had not a wife the disreputable Dazzle was wont to exclaim "More shame for you with all those children!" Now, at the Criterion, though they make the passage burlesque by changing it to "six wives and fifteen children," at least they expurgate Mr. Dazzle's naughty, wicked repartee.

I, for one, strongly applaud Mr. Wyndham's action. The author is dead, so it cannot be supposed to matter to him that his work is—improved; the actor who plays Dazzle cannot grumble, for he is Mr. Charles Wyndham himself; and by this sturdy defence of our old English morality the manager of the Criterion has once

and for all put an end to those ancient calumnies of Mr. Archer and the respectable ladies. The Criterion is not only a highly proper theatre—it is *the* theatre of propriety, and I hope that Mr. Wyndham will take an early opportunity of reviving some more of our famous plays to prove it. Especially would I draw his attention to "The Rivals"—a clever work entirely spoilt for me, I confess, by the horrible profanity of one line: "Damns have had their day." Would not every purpose be equally served if that eminent moralist, Mr. Robert Acres, were made to say "Bad words have had their day?"

Lest Mr. Wyndham should suspect in my words any covert meaning, akin to those which the prurient were apt to find in the most harmless jests of "Where's the Cat?" and "The Pink Dominos," let me hasten to array myself with the majority with regard to another matter. The Criterion manager is undoubtedly right in dressing the comedy after the fashion of the time of its birth; Dion Boucicault's first comedy is now half a century old, its people are far enough away to be picturesque, and its style quite old-fashioned enough to be stogy. Manners and language so different from our own need the costume of their day to go with them; and in this one respect the old piece is certainly a gainer.

But, as I fear, in this one respect alone. The dresses of 1840 are right; the acting, I venture to think, is all wrong. This is not so much the fault of individuals—read the names of the "cast," and you will find it quite strong enough to carry a worse play than "London Assurance." For, the critics of to-day notwithstanding, "London Assurance" is not a bad play—it cannot be. The sole survivor of its time, except three plays of Bulwer Lytton's, it must have very great merits: it belongs to a bad school, it gets as far away from nature as a play possibly can, to survive, but it does survive. A very few years ago it had two successful runs at the Vaudeville; it was on the whole well played, and the people heartily enjoyed it. A little while before that it was revived at the old Prince of Wales's, whose more delicate style it did not suit so well; but it is never long out of the bill, and always goes well when it is fairly played. It is conventional, impossible, full of faults; worse than this, it is now extremely old-fashioned; but it is—or was very lately—a capital evening's entertainment, and gives chances for some very effective acting. Moreover, now that those two scandalous lines are removed) it is entirely inoffensive.

As to its conventionalities, it must be remembered that the old stage-management lent itself to conventionality. Where, as in Molière at the Français, the characters for the most part stand in a line across the stage, nearly always facing the audience, no one is shocked when each in his turn says his word—the *soubrette* has not too much the air of thrusting herself into the conversation of her masters: there she stands, an equal member of the group. But now that we are used to an imitation of nature which professedly excludes all sheer conventionality, it gives an impossibility to the whole affair when the stage country-lawyer (most stagily played) forces himself into talk with the stage-baronet and his friends—and is bodily walked off by the stage-valet.

I can't but think, though, that with real ingenuity the resources of modern stage management might be employed to diminish, instead of exaggerating, the staginess of an old play; but this needs to be most warily done. Above all things, such a play should be acted with the fullest understanding. Care should first of all be taken to make all the author's points, before it is assumed that they need to be supplemented by sheer noise and bustle. There is, indeed, one golden rule for the acting of comedy, old or new: *It is a mistake to suppose that noise "keeps a play going."* Nothing can keep a play going if the meaning is left out.

Of all the brilliant cast of "London Assurance" at the Criterion only two actors of importance seemed to me thoroughly well placed: and these were Mrs. Bernard Beere, whose practice in greater parts gave a fine breadth and humanity to her style as Lady Gay, and Mr. George Giddens, full of intelligence and brightness as Dolly Spanker. With almost every one of the others I had constantly the feeling "I have seen you do much better work than this!"

Wherefore, Mr. Fieldmouse, you may set me down, if you choose, as an ungrateful

MUS IN URBE.

## THE DRAMATISTS.

### LVIII.—BEAUMARCHAIS.

Tragedy according to Corneille and comedy according to Molière reigned long in France; indeed the great fight between the new school and the old did not come till almost a third of the nineteenth century had passed away, and the French Revolution and the despotism which followed it had come and gone. Dumas' "Henri III." and Hugo's "Hernani" were not brought out till 1829 and 1830—when our Monsieur Dumas of to-day was a respectable little boy of five or six.

But the mutterings of the Revolution were echoed on the French stage a clear half-century before this. Words are spoken by that famous Barber of Beaumarchais whose spirit was far other than that of the Court of Louis XIV. "Votre Excellence connaît-elle beaucoup de maitres qui fussent dignes d'être valets?" is a question hardly to be asked of the *petits marquis* of Molière—even by Molière.

But a writer earlier than Beaumarchais—and greater as a writer, if not so great as a dramatist—did more than he to lead the drama into fresh fields. The great Diderot takes rank in France as inventor and first practitioner of the domestic drama—the *drame bourgeois*; though in other lands he had had plenty of forerunners—Calderon with his "Alcalde of Zalamea" being perhaps the first of them.

In England, where we either do not greatly love the drama or think fit to dissemble our love by keeping it downstairs as much as possible, Denis Diderot is known, one might almost say, exclusively as the chief founder of the famous *Encyclopédie*; but France remembers as well his labours for the drama—which, said one French critic, he "revolutionized in his spare moments." Born in 1713, and dying in 1784, his life just spanned the interval between the death of the *Grand Monarque* and the beginnings of that Revolution which his work helped so much to bring about.

This is not the place to discuss his encyclopædic labours, nor is there any need to tell once more of the place held by Diderot in that brilliant society which met at the Baron d'Holbach's suppers; it is more to our purpose to note that his great *confère* Rousseau had also his stage-success—in his comic opera, the "Devin du Village." Of late years there has been here some revival of interest in Diderot's critical work; and an elaborate discussion of the actor's emotions, suggested by our author's brilliant "Paradoxe sur le Comedien," resulted in a consensus of opinion in the main directly opposed to Johnson's brutal "Punch has no feelings."

Another work of Diderot's not strictly dramatic in form is essentially by far the most dramatic of all his writings. As a study from nature, expressed in vivid and characteristic dialogue, the "Neveu de Rameau" has no equals except in the famous company where stand together Falstaff and Don Quixote; he is the first of the series of brilliant vagabonds among whom Ibsen's vivid sketch of Ulrik Brendel is one of the latest.

Diderot's actual plays are now, perhaps, less interesting in themselves than as stepping-stones between the classic drama of Racine and Molière and the social comedies of Augier. The chief differences between the "Père de Famille" and the "Fils Naturel" and the earlier serious French plays are that their personages are modern characters of the middle class—hence the name of the "*bourgeois* drama"—and that they are written in prose: an enormous step forward. We all write *bourgeois* dramas now, but go a good way further than Diderot, who was afraid to disregard those precious Unities of time and place, and timid as to the mingling of comedy and pathos.

Beaumarchais departed less from the beaten track than his predecessor—indeed he might in some sense be called a pre-Molière, for (after



writing a couple of "sentimental comedies" in the manner of Diderot) he shocked the perpetrators of tame character-studies after "Le Misanthrope" by going boldly back to the old comedy of intrigue of the Spanish school. The scene of his two masterpieces, "Le Barbier de Seville" and "Le Mariage de Figaro," is laid in Spain, though with no very exact painting of Spanish character; and lovers of Rossini and Mozart will not need to be told that the two comedies carry on the history of the same group of characters—the typical Spanish gallant, and *ingénue*, and witty graceless *gracioso*, the barber Figaro.

The spirit that Beaumarchais showed throughout his life overflows in these two works. Besides and beyond their constant vivacity, their true and unforced wit, and the real dramatic skill with which their simple plots are carried on, there is always that gay and independent philosophy which delighted a people ready for revolution, and was singularly unpleasant to their rulers. The words of Figaro have become a proverb—*Je me presse de rire de tout, de peur d'être obligé d'en pleurer*. There is half Béranger in that line.

Apart from this his philosophy, there is little professed character-painting in Beaumarchais; his personages are those of the old Italian "masks," with this important difference, that they are *alive*. Rosina, for example, is a young person full of human nature; there are constant adroit touches which show how far this disingenuous little *ingénue* is from being a mere stage-puppet.

It would have been strange, perhaps, if a clever man like Beaumarchais had not written effective plays after a life so full of dramatic incident as his own. It shows the nature of his career that his narrative of the dishonourable conduct of José Clavijo to Mademoiselle Caron, Beaumarchais sister, gave Goethe the subject of one of his tragedies. The dramatist behaved with remarkable spirit in this affair; he was, indeed, altogether a man as vigorous as he was versatile. Born in 1732, Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, the son of a watchmaker, distinguished himself first in his father's craft, and then as politician, artist, merchant, and dramatist. He died in 1799—just before the end of the century, one of the notabilities of a notable time in France.

## NOTES AND NEWS.

"Mr. Tree's Monday nights" are discussed in the current number of the "Fortnightly"—in whose pages was first resumed the attack on the actor-manager begun fifty years ago in the earliest number of "Punch." It may perhaps be reckoned a covert prolongation of the warfare that "X."—the writer of this month's article—blandly expresses the hope that Mr. Tree's performance of the principal part will not be taken to be an invariable condition of these Monday productions; but the article is in the main a criticism of "Beau Austin." To see a play of high merit duly praised in one of our leading reviews is a pleasure, and a real one; but here the praise unluckily tends to gush, and the article is not over well written. However, any recognition of the entirely exceptional merit of "Beau Austin" is welcome; and "X." does good service in drawing attention to Mr. Archer's magnificent tribute to the play in the columns of "The World," and also to the excellence of Mr. Maurice's acting in almost the most difficult part our modern stage has known.

One is glad to hear that "Beau Austin" has proved genuinely attractive to the better class of playgoers, and after four Monday performances is to be played on Wednesday afternoons. Next Monday we are to have the "Red Lamp," the Monday after, "Captain Swift," and soon, we shall hope, that play of modern Roman life which Mr. Tree has promised us.

Mr. Malcolm Watson is in request. He has a commission to write a play for Mr. Charles Warner, who will produce it in Australia, and is to be represented in the English provinces by "The Pharisee," which will start next Easter, under the management of Mrs. F. H. Macklin.

The following extraordinary paragraph appears in last Tuesday's "Evening News":—"Mr. Richard Temple proposes to turn "The School for Scandal" into a comedy-opera. Poor Sheridan Knowles!"

But the "Evening News," if weak in its literary history, is very properly strong in a denunciation of certain inspectors appointed by the County

Council, who, after carefully inspecting the auditorium of Mr. Wilson Barrett's New Olympic, never dreamed of paying a visit to the actors' dressing-rooms. Remembering what Mr. Barrett did for his magnificent theatre at Leeds, one may be sure that actors at the Olympic will be safe from typhoid fever—but this is in no way the fault of the L.C.C. inspectors.

"The People's Idol," Mr. Barrett's new drama, was to be produced on Thursday the 4th, too late for notice this week. Those who saw the dress rehearsal of the play speak highly of it; but the inadvisability of prophesying before you know is especially marked in this case.

It is altogether so becoming a thing to dedicate a volume of poems to a young actress who, though both clever and pretty, is as yet little known to fame, that we are almost in the mood to forgive Mr. Hinshelwood for his "Wedded in Death," a good-looking book just published by Eden, Remington and Co. Moreover, Mr. Hinshelwood is an Australian poet, and in Australia the indigenous bard is rare. So, this time, Mr. Hinshelwood shall only be earnestly entreated not to do it again. One can see that he has worked at some of these poems, that he is not unlikely to do better some day, but hardly as a poet. To praise such work would not be really kind: to find more fault would be ungracious—for is it not dedicated to Miss Lilian Seccombe?

"The Lady from the Sea" having been postponed *sine die*, "Rosmersholm" has taken her place as the next Ibsen play to be produced—or so says Rumour, who adds (in her mendacious way) that Mr. Royce Carleton, being asked to take part in another Ibsen production, fled forthwith to New York.

A series of papers, entertaining and by no means useless, on "The Stage as a Profession," has been commenced by Miss Winifred Emery in "Woman." We are able, however, to give a piece of advice to young actors which resumes in fewer words all that can profitably be said on the subject: "Work as hard as Miss Emery and you will succeed—if you have the *physique* and the brains."

It is long since there has been such a dearth of *matinée* productions as we are blessed with this season. Last Tuesday, however, Mr. Julian Cross boldly faced the counter attractions of Mr. Parnell's conference and the "Kentish Town murder" trial with a new play of his own, called "The Penalty." We regret to say, however, that in the opinion of visitors to Terry's Theatre that afternoon, Mr. Parnell and the murder won easily.

## L. E. BACH.

Leonhard Emil Bach was born at Posen, in Prussia, on the 11th March, 1849. At six years of age he was encouraged in the pursuit of music by his mother, who was an accomplished pianist, and at that early stage of his career he received his first lessons on the pianoforte. At seven Bach played at a public concert given in his native place, and in the following year he gave several concerts in different parts of Germany. Very shortly after this period he was introduced to Meyerbeer, and this renowned composer took Bach to Kullak, under whom he studied for the next three years. Bach then undertook a *tournee* which extended over two years, and at fifteen entered the Berlin Academy as a Professor of Music. In 1868 he organised a concert at the Royal Opera House, which consisted entirely of Liszt's music, whereupon Liszt invited Bach to Weimar, from which circumstance dates the commencement of that friendship between the two artists which only terminated with the death of the Weimar Master. Bach has visited the principal towns of Germany, Italy, France, Scandinavia, and Egypt. In the course of these wanderings he has received numerous honorific distinctions. He is Chevalier of the Italian Order of S.S. Maurice and Lazarus, of the Imperial Turkish Order of the Medjidieh, Commander of the Portuguese Order of Christ, and during his recent visit the Shah of Persia conferred upon him the Order of the Lion and the Sun. He has written two concertos and a capriccio for piano with orchestral accompaniments, two overtures, a symphony, several sonatas, and a number of vocal pieces. His latest efforts in this direction include the six Polish sketches for four hands, already extremely popular, a set of waltzes, and a sonata for violoncello and piano. He is acknowledged to be one of the best teachers of the piano-forte living.

## THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

The winter exhibition in Suffolk-street is signalled by a rather better average in the merit of the work than has been the case for some time. We do not for a moment suggest that there is not work which had better have been left unhung, but would rather congratulate the hanging committee on their having attracted to the gallery some of the younger painters, who can support with more dignity than has been lately known there the work of a master like Watts or of such striving painters as Nelson, Dawson, and Frank Brangwyn. The work from the studios of these artists is still, however, so far beyond that of their supporters that we are justified in considering it first, putting on one side all catalogue regularity. The portrait of Lord Tennyson (No. 345), the contribution of Mr. Watts, is by now, we should imagine, well known; and if not the sooner the art world become thoroughly acquainted with the master's ideal of the Poet Laureate the better both for themselves and the poet; for there is in it a dignity which will make the poet's work the better understood and loved if it will bear the test of the comparison; and, if not, then how valuable will it be to men to have learned how far their admiration for the Laureate may justly go. A painting such as this one has the twofold value of its own magnificent conception and the union in thought of the twin arts, poetry and painting, qualities none too common in our century. Mr. Nelson Dawson is best represented by his large work, "The Sunset Breeze" (No. 374), and this in no unworthy manner. The subject is by no means complex, yet the execution shows so thorough a mastery over the idea, even as over the materials in which it is expressed, that we can safely say that we have not yet seen Mr. Dawson at greater advantage. The motion in the rolling mass of dark blue water, the swing of the smack which is standing taut against a breeze that can be felt throughout the picture, and the subtle strength of the dark tones which mingle in a colour harmony of great force combine to make a result of which the painter may be proud and at which the critic may rejoice. That Mr. Dawson can be strong without coarseness is well seen in the little water-colour rendering of a "Ferryman's Cottage" (No. 57), where we find a pleasant contrast of light pure tones which say much for the painter's scope, and encourages us to trust that the coarseness which is at present in such demand where strength is lacking, and the stereotype which the public used to love and still find heart for, may never bring down the work from the studio in Mauresa-road to the level of the much too common marine pot-boiler full of dash and vivid colour and wanting in every artistic merit. Close to the "Sunset Breeze" hangs Mr. Brangwyn's largest canvas (No. 381). The subject is a burial service at sea, and the treatment of it is frankly naturalistic. It is true that the scene is no more impressive than if the little crowd of seamen were mustered at a capstan head; but then the ship is a small one, the crew are rough, hard-working men, who have the habit of keeping regret well back, and do not strike theatric attitudes, and, on the whole, we may be thankful to have been spared a cheap dramatic effect. The work is clever if a little uninteresting, and we may safely look to Mr. Brangwyn with good hope for the future.

On the opposite wall is Mr. Dudley Hardy's "Jeannette" (No. 295), a study of a figure habited *à la mode*, which is as clever as it is ugly and inartistic in arrangement. It is good that Mr. Hardy should set himself difficult artistic problems, but the solving of them hardly warrants their appearing in a gallery where every artistic component is looked for on each canvas. A small genre study, "In the Studio" (No. 343), by Agnes Walker, is a careful piece of work from a hand not wanting in capacity. Seen at the height where it now hangs it is a little drabby in tone, and perhaps a better position would have helped it. Mr. Yglesias has the advantage of a good position for his "Durham" (No. 313), a picture with a foreground which it is pleasant to look upon; but we must confess to finding the towers of the cathedral just a little shaky in drawing, a feature which does not add to the value of the entire record. "Boats on the Giudecca, Venice" (No. 257), by Mr. Arthur Haynes, is decorative both in arrangement and in colour, and is not undeserving of mention, though the theme be one which is not altogether fresh. "A Sketch" (No. 446) by Mr. Titcomb in the south-east room is, to use a phrase of Bret Harte, "fine and French." Mr. Titcomb is giving himself away a little just now to the desire for "strong work," but this will pass with time, when the painter feels that he is to be the judge and not the public; and there should be some good work yet from his hand. In the same room is Mr. Machell's "Lakshmi" (No. 464). We have noticed

before this painter's fondness for rainbow tints—one not to be despised, and here they are not wanting. We can congratulate Mr. Machell on his leaving the track of common subject pictures, but regret to find in the present instance just enough of convention in arrangement to rob the picture of some of the praise which ought otherwise to fall to its lot. However, as the technique is good and the subject not common, it deserves notice. Mr. Priestman's "After sundown" (No. 466) is a thoughtful and interesting record of a willow stream which bespeaks a good ideal, while Mr. Cole's "Old Chums" (No. 478) is as unpleasantly true in tone as in subject. It is but too evident a fact that well-dressed friends of former days will escape us in comfortable hansoms when we are down at heel and out at elbows; but then the reality of civilization is not a subject to paint in most instances. 'Twere better to deal with the imaginings of life than with such ugly facts. Mr. Cayley Robinson's children "On a silver sea" (in No. 488) are cleverly painted, but the result is not attractive, technique is too prominent. A glimpse of "Salt Marshes" (No. 513) by Mr. A. D. McCormick is good in tone and in feeling, though somewhat geometrical in composition. If the younger school of painters will put their horizons high and range their figures beneath in a perpendicular group they must remember that so striking a resemblance to a T square has its disadvantages. Mr. Pye's record of "Herring-boats going out in a light breeze" is dainty in colour and decorative, while its truthfulness lends pictorial value. There are among the water-colours "A Moorland Road" (No. 16) by Mr. Bertram Gast, a view of the "Bristol Channel" (No. 20) by Mr. John Fraser, and a well put down note of "Shoreham from the South Downs" (No. 178) by Mr. Rackham, which unites the qualities which are found singly in the above mentioned—character and colour. "Genius and Passion," a small bronze bas-relief by Mr. Prosser in the same room, and also a portrait head in that material by Mr. Pomeroy contain good work.

## CONCERTS.

Seldom, or perhaps never of late years have the givers of orchestral concerts in London deserved more sympathy than in the present season. In most cases their programmes and their performances are so excellent as to deserve every support, but the public only shows its gratitude by stopping away, and sometimes when there is at least a promise of a respectable audience, the weather interposes, and a big fall in the temperature is followed by a bigger fall in the attendance. This latter cause was at work on Friday last, when Sir C. Hallé gave the second of his series of concerts, and we can only hope that Sir Charles was able to console himself, as Handel is said to have done, with the reflection, "Never mind! *te moosic* will sound te petter." At any rate the music could hardly have sounded better if the hall had been filled to the last place. The Manchester players began with a magnificent performance of the overture to "Oberon," which was followed by the Larghetto from Spohr's "Third Symphony," a movement apparently just kept alive by the fact of its containing a unison passage for strings which admirably shows off a fine body of players. Why does not some one revive Spohr's 2nd Symphony in D minor—a work actually written for the Philharmonic Society, and with which the composer took great pains? For the next piece Sir C. Hallé resigned the conductor's bâton to Mr. Willy Hess, and took his seat at the piano to play the solo part in Dvôrák's Concerto in G, Op. 33. The incongruous and incoherent style of this piece must always tell against it; the author seems to have had no dominating impulse, and hence it makes no particular impression; but nevertheless it abounds in beautiful ideas, and every now and then one of them is adhered to long enough to produce a delightful effect. The orchestration also is full of Dvôrák's own original charm. Sir C. Hallé's playing was, of course, admirable in every way, and the accompaniments received full justice. A superb rendering of Beethoven's 7th Symphony sent the audience away with a feeling of the highest satisfaction.

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M. Paderewski's last recital at St. James's Hall on the 27th ult. attracted a large and enthusiastic audience, and probably on no previous occasion has this gifted pianist played with greater success and artistic perception. The Beethoven Sonata chosen was the last of the three dedicated to Haydn,

The Greatest of all Pianofortes. THE STEINWAY PIANOFORTES. New York & London.  
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op. 2, No. 3, the rendering of which was remarkable for its intellectual grasp, masterly execution, and delicacy of light and shade. In an admirable selection of pieces by Chopin, which followed this fine performance, M. Paderewski sometimes let himself go as he is wont to do; but if now and then fortissimo passages degenerated into noise and incoherence there was a method in his madness, and his marvellous *technique* and delicacy atoned for much. No better example of this could be adduced than the delicate charm with which Chopin's Valse in C sharp minor was given, and the muscular vigour displayed in parts of the piece which followed, the well-known Polonaise in A flat. Other pieces were "Thème varie," by M. Paderewski, and which would seem to demand the utmost amount of digital dexterity; a graceful "Canzonetta," by his former teacher, Leschetizski, and "Valse Impromptu" and "Rhapsodie Espagnole," by Liszt. But the audience had by no means had enough, and so amidst much enthusiasm M. Paderewski seated himself once more and played the Paganini-Liszt arrangement of the now well-known "Campanella."

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The dominating feature of last Saturday's Crystal Palace Concert was, of course, the performance of Schubert's great symphony in C, generally known as "No. 9," but which, for stated reasons, the ever-hopeful "G" prefers to regard as "No. 10." How Mr. Manns and his band acquit themselves in their rendering of this extraordinarily fascinating work is well known—happily so for everyone, but especially so for the critic, who is thus saved from attempting to convey through the cold medium of print any idea of that which, though so obvious to the feelings, yet cannot be described. On the present occasion the members of the orchestra, both individually and collectively, shone to the greatest advantage, the result being such as to reflect unqualified honour upon all concerned, and one which must rank among the highest achievements of executive art. Mr. Leonard Borwick, who seems to be an especial favourite of Fortune, appeared in place of Mr. Sapellnikoff—"indisposed," shall we say?—choosing for his principal effort Brahms' Concerto in D minor, which, according to the analytical programme, had not been heard at a Saturday concert since 1875. If the statement be correct the fact is somewhat singular, seeing how much attention Herr Brahms' compositions command at the hands of cultivated audiences, and how striking and characteristic a work is his Opus 15. Marked by purity of style, breadth, and intelligence, Mr. Borwick's playing made a highly satisfactory impression. Miss Liza Lehmann, the vocalist of the afternoon, sang with her usual taste and much of her customary charm, songs by Thomé, Brahms and Meyer-Helmund, and as an encore "Annie Laurie." It only remains to add that a fine performance of the overture to "Der Freischütz" opened the concert, and that the attendance was lamentably small—a circumstance for which the inclemency of the weather sufficiently accounts.

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Referring to Frau Melina's acting in "Wilhelm Meister" Goethe says: "She laboured a few detached passages, but never could express the feeling of the whole." This criticism might perhaps have entered the heads of some of Mr. Paderewski's hearers at last Saturday's Popular Concert during the performance of his solos, which consisted of Schubert's Impromptu in B flat, Chopin's Polonaise in A flat, and Nocturne, Op. 62, No. 1—the last as an encore. Far be it from us to say that Mr. Paderewski "never expresses the feeling of the whole." Nothing could be more untrue; but we do say that when he is not inspired he does "labour detached passages" to a painful degree, making some of them sickly sweet and others savagely forcible, with the apparent object of startling where he cannot charm. Far more artistic was his reading of his own Sonata for violin and piano with Madame Neruda. This is a pleasing work in three movements, well and effectively written for both instruments. Still finer was his rendering with Signor Piatti of Rubinstein's Sonata in D. Unhesitatingly we assert that it was the most sympathetic reading of this familiar work to which we have ever listened. To mention only one "point": the prominence given in the "free fantasia" to the descending chromatic passage in the bass, which first appears in the statement of the second subject of the finale, gave something little short of a new life and meaning to this section of the work. Mr. Plunket Greene sang two extremely interesting songs by Mr. Battison Haynes, by whom he was accompanied, and three German songs in which his labial production of the language might have led a listener to believe he was singing in French. A Haydn Quartet completed the scheme.

Haydn's Quartet in F, Op. 77, No. 2, headed the programme of Monday's concert, and was of course admirably played by the usual quartet. The pianist was Señor Albeniz, who played very charmingly four pieces by Scarlatti—Nos. 55, 17, 15, and 31—of the sixty so-called "Sonatas." The accomplished Spanish pianist also took part in an excellent performance of Beethoven's Trio in C minor, of which he shared the honours with Madame Neruda and Signor Piatti. The lady played with her usually happy effect Spohr's "Barcarolle and Scherzo;" and the vocalist, Miss Lehmann, sang Thomé's "Perles d'or" and Hook's "When the East begins to dawn."

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At the students' concert given in St. George's Hall on Saturday evening convincing evidence was given of the sound basis upon which the London Academy of Music is now established. The gentlemen who have undertaken to direct the affairs of the institution since the death of Dr. Wyld are evidently well on the way towards the fulfilment of their obviously high ideals of education. The students who appeared on Saturday showed, one and all, that they have been in earnest, and that their teachers have been able. This was especially noticeable in the orchestral pieces, in which it was a genuine pleasure to note the freedom and breadth of style displayed by all the violinists, who, in other points too, may challenge competition with those of older and larger institutions. To Mr. Pollitzer the credit for this is plainly due. Individual praise is equally demanded on behalf of Miss Grace Meiter, whose violin solos were a Chopin-Sarasate Nocturne and a Mazurka by Wieniawski—both excellently played. Chopin's Polonaise in C, for pianoforte and violin, was very crisply given by Miss Annie Stefans and Miss M. Salmon; and Miss A. Rodocanachi was successful in an Etude of Chopin. The vocalists did equal credit to their instructors. Miss Edith Beyfus gave a very intelligent and sympathetic rendering of Thomas's "Connais-tu le pays?" Miss Carlotta Lynn sang "O mio Fernando" excellently; Mr. Mervyn Dene's reading of "O ruddier than the cherry" was duly vigorous; Miss Emily Foxcroft and Miss Dora Gill—the one in "Regnava nel silenzio," the other in the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria"—achieved success; and Miss Ada Wray displayed a pure voice and an unaffectedly expressive style. Teresa Blamy and Miss Leila Dufour have emerged from the student stage, and showed that the high expectations already formed of them are not likely to be disappointed. So Mr. Pollitzer and his colleagues in the London Academy have ample reason to be satisfied.

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Concerts at the Royal College have recently succeeded one another with such rapidity that it is almost impossible to keep pace with them. We must pass over those of the 20th and 29th ult. in order to deal with that of December 1, which was of exceptional interest as showing the progress of pupils, not in that branch which each one makes his chief study, but in that secondary study which the rules of the College require every student to select. It seems only fair to give our first attention to those whose primary study is composition, and who therefore have no chance to be heard at the ordinary College Concerts. Of these pupils the most noteworthy was Miss Ella Overbeck, who played Grieg's Piano Sonata in E minor. With the recollection of Grieg's playing in our minds, we are not prepared to say that we think the young lady's performance would have obtained the composer's entire approval. It was clear, marvellously clear, each phrase standing out as though lighted up by an electric flash, and it was full of brilliancy and vigour. If Miss Overbeck can only put into her compositions as much of these qualities as she exhibits in her playing, we may expect to hear of her some day. Mr. S. Liddle played a Toccata of Bach's for organ clearly and well, only perhaps a little too fast. Of the other items we may remark in general terms that it would not be fair to expect a pianist to display any peculiar excellence as a singer, or as a player on the 'cello, or *vice versa*, a singer to shine as a pianist. It is only as a curiosity that one listens to Miss L. Singleton as a singer, to Miss Amy Grimson as a 'cellist, or to Miss Ethel Webster and Miss Gulielma Hack as pianists. Miss Gertrude Brown, properly a pianist, has a pretty voice, and would seem to have a fair chance of success as a singer. Mr. F. G. Shinn, in Mendelssohn's Caprice in A minor, Op. 33; Mrs. Gib in the Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14; Mr. Reginald James in Fugue from Sonata in E minor (Merkel); and Miss Ada Walter in Bach's Organ Fugue in B minor may also be praised for their respective performances.

St. James's Hall was, as a matter of course, crowded on Saturday evening, when the annual Scottish Concert in honour of St. Andrew's Eve was given. It was also matter of course that the patriotic audience should pass the time before the commencement of the concert with singing, which was less artistic than noisy; and that its members should applaud each artist who appeared with almost impartial enthusiasm. We say *almost*, for Miss Liza Lehmann and Mr. Lloyd certainly won—and deserved—the most important shares of the applause, although the audience seemed at first disinclined to welcome the clever settings by Mr. Stewart Macpherson of “Ye banks and braes” and “My Love is like the Red, Red Rose,” missing the familiar tunes. Mr. Lloyd also gave “Draw the sword, Scotland” in splendid style, fully appreciated by his hearers, who recognised also the charm which characterised Miss Lehmann's delivery of “The Flowers of the Forest.” Mrs. Georgie Park and Mr. John Gilchrist—who are members of the Glasgow Select Choir—sang with success; and the other artists engaged were Madame Enriquez, Miss Kentish Moore, Mr. Walter Clifford, and Mr. Norman Salmund, of whom the first and last demand special praise. The Glasgow Choir gave a number of part-songs with excellent effect.

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St. Andrew's Eve was also celebrated at the Crystal Palace on Saturday evening by a promenade concert, in which Miss Minnie Duffus, Mme. Antoinette Sterling, and Mr. Ivor McKay took part. The programme was naturally very Scottish in character, and the large audience very enthusiastic. It must be admitted that the enthusiasm was justified, for the three singers named did full justice to their music. The orchestral selections—also very Scottish—were admirably played by the Crystal Palace Military Band combined with that of the Royal Horse Guards (Blues).

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When Mr. Isidore de Lara gave an orchestral concert last season, and sang the “Credo” from Verdi's “Otello,” we ventured on behalf of the musical world to assure him that if he showed a genuine desire to enter the ranks of the artists his past misdeeds should not be remembered against him. We fancied that we detected indications of that desire, and we, figuratively, held the gate of the fold open for him. Alas for the vanity of human expectations! Mr. de Lara gave another concert on Tuesday evening, and made it evident that he had fallen away from his higher love. In the four songs from his own pen the familiar features of his old emasculate style were once more prominent, and the artificiality of his assumed dramatic method was made painfully evident in the duets which he gave with M. Maurel. That is really all there is to say about his performances. He is, however, entitled to the gratitude of all who care for dramatic singing in the highest form for having afforded them an opportunity of hearing the great French baritone on the concert stage. M. Maurel sang the “Credo” with the same terrible intensity of devilish passion which made his performance of Iago so memorable; and added Lotti's “Pur Dicesti,” Hess's “Dis-moi que tu m'aimes,” and Tosti's “Ninon.” These are trifles compared with the “Credo,” but M. Maurel sang them so magnificently that they seemed almost on the same plane of art. Particularly in the second and third was the variety of colour and expression marvellous, his rendering of Hess's song, in the manly passion which never lacked either strength or respect, setting an admirable example to the school represented by the concert giver. It remains to be said that Madame Nordica, with the familiar beauty of voice and charm of style, sang Delibes' “Les filles de Cadix” and the scena from “La Reine de Saba;” Madame de Nory sang songs by Gounod and Massenet; and M. Tivadar Nachez and Mr. Leo Stern gave violin and cello solos with excellent effect.

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An extremely well-arranged programme was presented at the orchestral concert given by the Westminster Orchestral Society on Wednesday evening. It may at once be said that the manner of its execution was well worthy of the matter. Gounod's “Mireille” Overture, the march from “Le Prophète” and Mr. William Shakespeare's “Dramatic Overture” were the chief orchestral items, all of which were played with spirit, precision, and sympathy. Mr. Shakespeare's overture proved to be a picturesque and very scholarly composition; it seems to require some explanation, however, for at a first hearing it was not easy to grasp the significance of so much tragic and even menacing music, interrupted by the recurrence of two suave and tender melodies. The scoring is

very effective, and the work as a whole commended itself to the warm sympathy of the audience. Miss Emily Shinner played Max Bruch's violin concerto in G minor in most praiseworthy fashion, and to Mr. Shakespeare's accompaniment played Spohr's Scherzo in D capitolly. The vocalists were Miss Ada Patterson—who replaced Miss Clara Leighton at short notice—and Mr. Edward Branscombe. The lady essayed the great scena from “Roberto,” and, with much better effect, Sullivan's song, “Orpheus with his lute”; while the gentleman's fine voice was well displayed in Gerard Cobb's “Serenade” and the Barcarolle from “Un Ballo.”

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The excellent orchestral body known, for the sake of brevity, as “The Strollers,” gave their first smoking concert of the season on Wednesday evening in Princes' Hall, when the audience was as distinguished and as appreciative as usual. To be distinguished is sometimes, and for some people, inevitable; greatness is thrust upon them; but enthusiasm is a matter of will and circumstance. Therefore in the present instance we attach no importance to the first, and proceed to say that the second quality was fully justified by the wholly admirable manner in which Mr. Norfolk Megone's orchestra executed the interesting programme. Mendelssohn's “Ruy Blas” Overture, Max Bruch's Prelude to “Die Lorelei,” Grieg's “Peer Gynt” suite, and the clever variations on a German air by Siegfried Ochs were the chief pieces. All of them were capitolly played, the “Lorelei” particularly so. The variations proved to be a series of striking clever and amusing parodies of the styles of various composers. The theme chosen is the volkslied, “Es Kommt ein Vogel geflogen,” and it is treated successfully in the manner of Bach, Mozart, Strauss, Verdi, Gounod, Meyerbeer, and Wagner. The style of each is very happily caught, the two best instances being unquestionably the Mozart and Wagner parodies. The amusing work was played with evident gusto. Vocal music was given by the popular Meister Glee Singers, whose part-songs were admirably given and well appreciated. Mr. Saxon, however, was missing from the quartet, his place being taken by Mr. Arthur Strugnell. Two of these clever singers—Mr. Gregory Hast and Mr. Webster Norcross—also gave solos with excellent effect. The audience did smoke?

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Notwithstanding the severity of the weather Steinway Hall was well filled on the night of Thursday, November 27th, on the occasion of Mr. Charles Copland's first vocal recital. The young artist, gifted with a fine baritone voice, used with much taste, himself made several appearances during the evening, being specially successful in two songs by R. Steggall, named “A Song of Hope” and “A Serenade at Twilight,” to the former of which an effective violin obbligato was played by Miss Kate Chaplin. Mr. Copland also gave the “Erl King,” but his reading of this was not entirely satisfactory, although he sang otherwise with intelligent earnestness, and made a decidedly favourable impression upon his audience. Madame Frickenhaus played a Chopin Nocturne (in E) and a Tarantelle by Liszt in a manner worthy of her high repute, and Miss Kate Chaplin was heard to advantage in an adagio and canzonetta by Godard. Miss Agnes Janson and Mrs. Helen Trust contributed various songs to the programme, amongst which Massenet's “Crepuscule,” given by the first-named lady, and Cowen's “Snowflakes,” admirably rendered by Mrs. Trust, thoroughly deserved the applause which so warmly greeted them. A noteworthy feature of the concert was a performance of the Brahms' “Liebeslieder” Waltzes, of which a very good account was given by Mrs. Trust, Miss Janson, Mr. Charles Rose, and Mr. Copland. Mention of Mr. Frederick Upton must not be forgotten, who gave two sketches in outline of ultra sensational novels in a fashion which was delightfully quaint and incisive.

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By far the most satisfactory part of the programme at the Insurance Musical Society's Smoking Concert on November 26th was that portion of it entrusted to the orchestra, for the choir, although singing conscientiously and correctly, seemed to be afflicted with gloom. The same remark applies to Mr. F. E. Lacy's humorous songs, which were not given with his usual spirit and vivacity; while Mr. Townsend's vocal efforts were principally noticeable for defective intonation. But, on the other hand, the fine voice and refined style of Mr. A. Munkittrick, jun., did full justice to Lohr's “Love's Proving” and Tosti's “Beauty's Eyes,” and Mr. Henry Body made an unequivocal success with his artistic and finished rendering of Clay's “I'll sing the songs of Araby.” Both these gentlemen



won a well deserved encore. Amongst the choral numbers the most effective were Beale's well known "Come let us join" and the glee "Vulcan, contrive me!" although they were but coldly received by the audience. The orchestral items included the "Bohemian Girl" overture, "Gondoliers" selection, an Intermezzo, and Waltz. The overture was intelligently and brightly played, with a crispness and precision often found wanting in amateur performances. The selection from the "Gondoliers" was also remarkably well given, and the cornet solo of Mr. C. F. Roe obtained a meed of hearty approbation. It is a matter of surprise that with such a capable orchestra available, those who are responsible for the arrangement of the Society's concerts do not give the band greater prominence; as, judging by the appreciation shown on Wednesday, the alteration would certainly find favour with the audience. Dr. H. T. Pringuer, to whom the careful training of the band and choir is entirely due, conducted with his usual skill and earnestness.

## MUSIC AND THE DRAMA IN BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

"Autres temps, autres mœurs : le rythme et la cadence  
Ont suivi les hasards et la commune loi."

Alfred de Musset spoke wisely—we have reached another age, the age of concert-giving. Things have indeed changed. Everybody gives concerts, and hardly a day passes when we are not called upon to attend, or shall we say compelled to listen to amateur orchestras fearfully out of tune and time, to singers without voices and without method. Though we do not intend to speak of these, we must record our local doings in the musical and theatrical world from time to time. The winter season is with us "La haute saison," and during the last month concerts of great excellence have been given by local musical bodies, by renowned professors, and by our first musical *entrepreneurs*: Pieces like the "Middleman," "Judah," "Joseph's Sweetheart," "Miss Tomboy," "Confusion," the old comedies of Sheridan, comic operas and burlesques of all shades and styles, and dramas too numerous to name have been played at our three large theatres, the Royal, the Prince of Wales's, and the Grand, by excellent touring companies. The best plays, the "Middleman" and the like, brought the least money; dramas and comic operas of the hackneyed type, overflowing houses.

Among the principal concerts given this season we gladly dwell upon that given by Mr. F. Ward, our chief violinist, who on this occasion was associated with Miss Fanny Davies (piano), Mr. Edward Howell (violin-cello), and Mr. W. Lee Mathews (baritone). The programme was modelled on strictly classical lines, especially in the concerted items, of which the magnificent Trio in D minor, Op. 63, by Schumann, which closed the concert, deserves special mention. It was played with superb finish and fire by Miss Davies and Messrs. Ward and Howell. Mr. F. Ward chose for his solo the fine Violin Concerto by Hans Sitt, and Miss Fanny Davies played solos by Schumann, Liszt, Chopin, &c., with her accustomed clear and scholarly finish. The Polish pianist, Paderewski, gave a second piano recital, which was crowded, the audience being in a state of frenzy, and the virtuoso receiving one of the most enthusiastic receptions ever accorded to a pianist here, and which can only be compared to that given to Anton Rubinstein nine years ago. Our local *chef d'orchestre*, Mr. Stockley, gave his first Orchestral Concert last week, and introduced Hamish MacCunn's overture, "Land of the Mountain and the Flood," first performed at the Crystal Palace in November, 1887. A great feature of the well-chosen programme was Saint-Saëns' Pianoforte Concerto in G minor, Op. 22, played by Dr. R. M. Winn, a local professor of music, of whose performance we can speak in terms of much praise as regards scholarly and correct playing, but there was a great lack of character and want of light and shade. Mr. Stockley conducted in his usual experienced manner the orchestra of eighty performers, which ranks now among the best in the provinces. Miss Fanny Moody and Mr. Charles Manners were the vocalists. Two special favourites in Birmingham, they were most enthusiastically received and recalled for their admirable singing. This week the Birmingham Festival Choral Society gave, as their second subscription concert of the season, Mendelssohn's "Elijah." We hardly need dwell upon the excellence of our chorus. In so familiar a work, the Birmingham Oratorio *par excellence*, the singing was simply perfect in every respect. The principals included Miss Fillunger

(her first appearance in Birmingham), Madame Belle Cole, Mr. Ivor McKay, and Mr. W. Mills. Mr. C. W. Perkins was at the organ, and Mr. Stockley conducted as usual. Messrs. Harrison's Second Grand Subscription Concert took place on Monday, with the following admirable list of artists:—Madame Nordica, Madame Alwina Valleria, Miss Louise Bourne, Mr. Braxton Smith, Signor Foli, Madame Essipoff (piano), Monsieur Johannes Wolff (violin), Herr Julius Klengel (violin-cello), Mons. Sieveking conductor.

## PROVINCIAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

LEEDS, DEC. 2ND.—On the 25th November Mr. Edgar Haddock, one of the best known of our local violinists, began the seventh season of his happily-named "Musical Evenings" with a concert at which Mdme. de Pachmann was the pianist, Mdme. Marie Roze the vocalist, and the concert-giver the violinist. One of the most notable performances was Mdme. de Pachmann's fine rendering of Mendelssohn's "Variations Sériuses," which gave one the satisfactory impression that so would the composer himself have wished it done. Mdme. Roze made an excellent impression by her refined singing of Gounod's scena, "Plus grand dans son obscurité," though a new ballad by Mr. G. P. Haddock was more thoroughly appreciated by the audience. Mr. Haddock played a new "Larghetto" by Mdme. de Pachmann, and joined that lady in Schumann's Sonata in A minor and a pleasing "Suite" by César Cui. On the following evening the Leeds Philharmonic Society began their season with "Judas Maccabæus," of which they gave a fine performance, though not perhaps as near perfection as might fairly have been expected from so well organised and highly trained a choir as Mr. Alfred Broughton's. The soloists were Mdme. Anna Williams, Miss Annie Woods, Miss Dews, Messrs. Barton McGuckin and Andrew Black, all of whom did well, though we are inclined to think the palm was due to the last-named artist for his conscientious and highly-artistic performance of the bass solos. The society has in preparation a most interesting programme for the last concert of the season in March, when, in addition to Verdi's effective, if sensational, "Requiem," Dr. Parry's Norwich cantata, "L'Allegro ed il Penseroso," will be given for the first time in Leeds. As both the composer and his music are in high favour with Leeds singers it is pretty safe to predict a fine performance of this masterly work.

MANCHESTER.—The "Gentlemen's" first drawing-room concert was held on the 24th ult. The solo instrumentalists were Mr. Hess (violin), who contributed Spohr's "Barcarolle" and Zarzycki's "Mazurka," Mr. Fuchs ('cello) three short pieces by Richter, and Mr. Fredk. K. Dawson (piano), who gave Chopin's "Andante spianato" and "Grand Polonaise," Liszt's "12th Rhapsodie," and in response to a recall Raff's "Bigaudon." The artistic abilities of Messrs. Hess and Fuchs are well known and fully appreciated here, but the remarkable executive power exhibited by Mr. Dawson came as a great surprise. This young pianist is a native of Leeds; he is 22 years of age, and as a bravura player should take rank second to none. Mozart's G minor "Piano Quartet" was, however, an unsatisfactory performance on Mr. Dawson's part, which clearly showed that he has still something to learn as a concertante player. Mdme. Trebelli contributed several songs, including a pleasing "Vilanelle" by Eva dell'Acqua, which was new to us. The concert concluded with Beethoven's C major "String Quintet." On the same evening Dr. C. J. Hall gave his fourth lecture on "English Music," and Mr. Bauerkeller his fourth "Quartet Evening." The items of Mr. Bauerkeller's programme were Schumann's String Quartet (Op. 41), Dvůrák's Piano Quartet (Op. 87), and Gade's String Quartet (Op. 63). On the 27th ult. Mendelssohn's "Elijah" was presented—for the twenty-fifth time—at Sir Charles Hallé's concerts, with Miss Anna Williams, Madame Hope Glenn, Mr. Ivor McKay, and Mr. Andrew Black as principals. The declamatory music allotted to the Prophet was rendered with telling effect by Mr. Black, and the performance throughout was excellent. Mr. Theinhardt, a local pianist, gave a concert on the 1st inst. which deserves more than mere passing notice. It was the first of a series which are described as "Concerts for the Propagation of Contemporary Music." The scheme is excellent, if properly carried out, but the small attendance was most disheartening. The most important work was Thuille's Sextet in B flat, for piano, flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon; and it was fairly well played by Messrs. Theinhardt, Brossa, Reynolds, Wadsworth, Paersch, and Ackeroyd. It is in four movements, of which the Gavotte—which here replaces the usual minuet

—was the most successful. An Andante and Scherzo by Rubinstein for the same instruments, *sensu oboe*, was an interesting work. Miss Milly Linck, a pupil of Mr. Henschel, sang a concert-aria by Reinecke, songs by Sterndale Bennett, Sachs, Volkmann, and others in an artistic manner. Two short pieces by Kirchner were admirably played by the concert-giver.

**SOUTHEAST.**—The name of M. Paderewski guaranteed a rare musical treat to those who were fortunate enough to hear, on Monday afternoon, at the Portland Hall, one of the greatest living pianists. M. Paderewski has of late been so often before the public and under review that it is superfluous to say more than that the warmest expectations were fully realised, and his marvellous rendering of his selections thoroughly appreciated on the occasion. The recital was under the direction of Mr. Daniel Mayer.

**CHELTENHAM.**—Concerts of all kinds are now of nightly occurrence. The chief event of the past week was the first appearance in this town of Señor Sarasate, accompanied by Madame Bertha Marx. Both achieved immense success, and made the occasion memorable. The Saturday Promenade Concerts at the Montpellier are being well supported, the third of the series taking place to-day. At the Winter Gardens Mr. D'Oyly Carte's "Mikado" and "Gondoliers" company have drawn large houses all the week, and the artists have all deservedly won great applause. Next week the invitation performance of "Iolanthe" by the local amateurs' operatic troupe takes place at the Winter Gardens. At Mr. Corton's concert on Saturday Miss Elsie Fayne and Mr. Charles Hildesley were the vocalists, while Mrs. Van Praag gave several recitations with familiar success.

### REVIEWS.

"The Double Bass," by A. C. White. This practical and comprehensive volume is the thirty-second of Messrs. Novello's Music Primers to which our musical progress of late is much indebted. The book under notice may be strongly recommended to all students of this most valuable

orchestral instrument. It forms as complete a tutor as any book can be the many exercises being not only preceded by explanatory directions but by anticipatory remarks concerning the possible errors likely to arise in execution. The book also contains a short introduction to the rudiments of music, a copious vocabulary of technical terms and expressions, and a long extract from the valuable lecture on the double bass delivered by the author before the Musical Association in 1887.

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June 8.	Prof. Herkimer's "An Idyl."
June 15.	Fraulein Hermine Spies.
June 22.	Signorina Teresina Tus.
June 29.	Madame Marcella Sembrich.
July 6.	Madame Backer Gröndhal.
July 13.	Sir John Stainer.
July 20.	Madame Lillian Nordica.
July 27.	M. Jean de Reszke.
Aug. 3.	Charles Dibdin.
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Aug. 31.	Herr Van Dyck.
Sept. 7.	M. Johannes Wolff.
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Feb. 22.	Browning's "Stratford."
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# ASCHERBERG PIANOS.

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"I only perform an act of justice when I ascribe my successes to a great extent to the excellent Instruments from your factory, on which I was favoured to play before the public. Remain convinced that I shall at all times and everywhere give preference to your Pianos over all others, and accept the assurance of my unbounded esteem.

Respectfully,

VLADIMIR VON PACHMANN."

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